

The Ballad of the Dragonborn Four

by Dream Dragoness

Category: Elder Scroll series, How to Train Your Dragon

Genre: Adventure, Fantasy

Language: English

Characters: Dragonborn/Dovahkiin, Hiccup, Toothless

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2013-02-27 03:10:38

Updated: 2016-01-27 20:58:00

Packaged: 2016-04-26 13:36:42

Rating: T

Chapters: 18

Words: 77,152

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: While traveling to other lands, Hiccup and Toothless find themselves in Skyrim. After an attack caused by a mysterious black dragon, the duo must team up with the three new Dragonborn; Renee the Nord swordswoman, J'Kiir the Khaljiit thief, and Rahm-Ku the Argonian mage. Can they find a way to defeat Alduin and save the world before it's too late?

1. Imprisoned and Dragon Attack

****Chapter 1****

****Imprisoned and Dragon Attack****

This story I have been thinking of for a while. I had thought to myself as I played Skyrim, "What would happen if Hiccup and Toothless get lost in Skyrim and become a part of the adventure in the fight against Alduin?" This is the result.

July 6, 2013: Update. Thanks to Yuvon-Dovah Ray and Quintian- The Dovahkiin Dwarf, I now have a better saying for Alduin.

I do not own How to Train your Dragon, nor The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim. I only own Renee, J'Kiir, and Rahm-Ku. They are eighteen.

* * *

><p>Hiccup woke slowly to a throbbing pain in his head and the sense of motion moving him. Groaning, he rubbed his brunette head with his hands-wait! His hands? His vision clearing, Hiccup was greeted at the sight of his hands being bound with a thick rope. He then looked up just as a man's voice spoke.

"I see you have returned to the waking world, lad. Better take it easy. It seems as though you had a nasty fall there."

A fall. That was what happened. He was flying farther from Berk than before when a fierce storm came and knocked him away from Toothless, his Night Fury. With the heavy rain and the fog, Hiccup couldn't see a thing before stumbling through the trees and passing out once he hit the ground.

"Whereâ€|where am I?" He asked the man in front of him.

The man, a muscular blond with a beard, answered him.

"I take it you're not from here, are you lad?"

Hiccup shook his head.

"No. I'm from a small island in the northwest. I just turned eighteen and started traveling with a...friend of mine. I have no idea where in the world am I."

"Then let me be the one to tell you, lad. You are in the province of Skyrim, on the continent of Tamriel."

Skyrim? Tamriel? Hiccup had never heard of those places before. But then again, Berk was an isolated place. Looking at the bonds on his hands, Hiccup asked again. "W-why am I tied up?" The man in front of him answered.

"How you became unconscious, I do not know. But the damned Imperials picked you up shortly after they captured us, the lass on your right, the Argonian next to her, and the Khajiit next to him. Along with that thief over there."

Hiccup looked to his right and was startled at the sight of an unconscious lizard person and an equally unconscious cat person. Seeing the boy's expression, the man chuckled.

" I take it you had never encountered Argonians or Khajiit before."

"Encountered? I've never even heard of them." Hiccup whispered so as not to wake the unusual-looking people.

Still giving of a soft snicker, the man spoke.

"Well then. Since we have the time, I'll tell you about them."

"If you don't mind, I would rather speak for my own people than have a Nord judge them by reputation." A smooth, deep voice came from the cat person.

The cat person was white as snow with black stripes along down his arms and black spots speckled his tail. He had short, black hair that was tied in dreadlocks with gold rings on the ends. His emerald eyes mystified the boy. He was dressed in rags.

"I am what is called a Khajiit. But my name is J'Kiir. My homeland is to the far south of the continent and goes by the name Elsweyr. We Khajiit have vision that is superior to others, for we are able to see clearly at night. We are also light on our feet and if we need to sneak up on something, no one can hear us."

"And that is why your people have become professionals at the art of thievery? This, in turn, enables you to produce Moon Sugar and Skooma without getting caught." The man, whom Hiccup identified as a Nord, spoke up.

J'Kiir narrowed his eyes and gave a low growl like a normal cat.

"It is not our fault that the other races cannot handle just a small bit of narcotics. Besides, I am not fond of either Moon Sugar or Skooma."

"H-how did you get caught, J'Kiir?" Hiccup spoke, trying to prevent a fight on the wagon.

J'Kiir relaxed a bit and answered.

"Wrong place at the wrong time, my unusual friend. I was on my way to Riften when I stumbled upon the ambush that took these gentlemen and this young lady. I am certain that the Argonian and the Nord are also not with them."

"Indeed I was not. I cannot say for the woman." The Argonian answered, clearly awake now.

From what Hiccup could see, the Argonian's scales were as green as the trees around them. On the top of his head were sapphire feathers that act as hair and spikes on each of its sides. He also had two larger horns that were curled a bit and hazel eyes. Like J'Kiir, he too was in rags. He answered Hiccup's mental question immediately.

"I am called Rahm-Ku. My people are from a southern land known as Black Marsh. And like the Khajiit next to me, I too have abilities that are exclusive to my race. Argonians are able to breath underwater and have an advanced immune system, meaning we don't get sick as easily. But I do have other talents."

"Such as?" Hiccup asked.

"I am studying to become a mage. I was on my way to the college up at Winterhold when I was captured for, as the cat said, at the wrong place at the wrong time."

J'Kiir hissed.

"Watch it, Argonian, before I decide to turn you into six pairs of boots and a few new belts."

"Enough. Both of you." A groggy voice spoke.

Hiccup looked and saw that the voice belonged to the woman next to him. He couldn't tell how old J'Kiir and Ram-Ku were, but he could tell that this woman was his age. She had ivory skin and blazing red hair tied in a ponytail. She too was dressed in rags. The girl fixed her sapphire eyes at Hiccup.

"You know. They have told you about them. But we know nothing of you. What is your name, for example?"

Hiccup knew this question was coming and knew the result of his

answer.

"As I said toâ€|errâ€|what was your name?" He asked the older Nord.

"Ralof." He answered.

"Thank you." He told Ralof before turning back to the girl. "As I had told Ralof, I am from an isolated island from the northwest called Berk. My name's Hiccup."

The result was the three youths and Ralof snickering.

"Why would any parent call their kitten 'Hiccup'?" J'Kiir asked after he finished laughing.

With an annoyed look, Hiccup answered.

"On Berk, it is believed that a scary name would scare away evil spirits. Unfortunately, I was the runt of the entire village."

"I am sorry to hear that, my friend. Sounds like you've had a pretty rough life." The girl spoke.

"You don't know the half of it, Missâ€|"

The Nord girl answered with a smile.

"Renee. My name is Renee."

It was then that the man that Ralof indicated as a horse thief muttered as he, too, woke.

"Damn you Stormcloaks. Skyrim was fine until you came along. Empire was nice and lazy. If they hadn't been looking for you, I could've stolen that horse and be halfway to Hammerfell."

He then look to Hiccup, Renee, J'Kiir, and Rahm-Ku.

"You four. You and me- we shouldn't be here. It's these Stormcloaks the Empire wants."

"We're all brothers and sisters in binds now, thief." Ralof stated.

"Shut up back there!" The wagon's driver called out.

After a few moments of silence, the horse thief spoke, looking at the gagged man next to Rahm-Ku.

"And what's wrong with him, huh?"

Ralof snapped at him.

"Watch your tongue. You're speaking to Ulfric Stormcloak, the true High King."

Hiccup and the youths in the wagon didn't have a clue what he was talking about until the thief spoke.

"Ulfric? The Jarl of Windhelm? You're the leader of the rebellion."

His eyes then widened in fear.

"But if they captured youâ€¦ Oh gods, where are they taking us?"

Ralof answered him.

"I don't know where we're going, but Sovngarde awaits."

As the ride went on, Hiccup looked to the trees for any sign of Toothless, hoping the dragon could help him from going to this 'Sovngarde' place. Seeing confusion instead of searching, Renee spoke to him.

"Sovngarde is the Nordic afterlife. It calls us when we no longer can live in this world."

Hiccup looked to Renee in anxiety.

"If I'm here in Skyrimâ€¦ Then if I dieâ€¦"

"I am certain you would go to your designated afterlife, lad. But if we find you at the gates of Sovngarde, we Nords will make sure you are welcomed." Ralof spoke, hoping to relive the boy.

He then turned his attention to the horse thief.

"Hey, what village are you from horse thief?"

"Why do you care?" The man asked.

"A Nord's last thoughts should be of home."

After a moment of silence, the man answered.

"Rorikstead. I'mâ€¦ I'm from Rorikstead."

As Hiccup looked for to the forest, he took Ralof's advice and thought of Berk. Because of his carelessness, the Viking might die this particular day.

But he thought, he spotted a black figure hiding amongst the trees, following the parade of wagons.

"_Toothless!" _

Indeed, the dragon had followed the wagon ever since the fall, waiting for a chance to get at Hiccup. There may be hope yet.

"General Tullius, sir! The headsman is waiting!"

"Good. Let's get this over with."

Well so much for that thought.

Ralof looked at a man on a horse in the village they were entering,

speaking to a golden-skinned person as the horse thief prayed aloud.

"Shor, Mara, Kynareth, Akatosh. Divines, please help me."

Hiccup didn't know who these Divines were, but turned his attention to Ralof as he spoke bitterly about the man and the strange person.

"Look at him, General Tullius the Military Governor. And it looks like the Thalmor are with him. Damn elves. I bet they had something to do with this."

The questions in Hiccup's mind only grew as they continued onward into the heart of the city.

"What is this place?"

Ralof, like before, answered him.

"This is Helgen. I used to be sweet on a girl from here. I wonder if Vilod is still making that mead with juniper berries mixed in. Funny, when I was a boy, Imperial walls and towers used to make me feel so safe."

Hiccup remained silent as he heard a boy being rushed in by his father, not wanting him to see what was going to happen. Soon, the carriages stopped at a wall in the town square near an inn.

"Why are we stopping?" The horse thief asked nervously.

"Why do you think? The end of the line."

Hiccup didn't like the sound of that. And neither did J'Kiir, Rahm-Ku, and Renee. The four of them hoped that they would get let out because they were innocent. At least, three of them might be, for none knew what to think of J'Kiir. Ralof then addressed the four youths in the wagon.

"Let's go. Shouldn't keep our gods waiting for us."

The horse thief began to panic.

"No. Wait! We're not rebels!"

"Face your death with some courage, thief." Ralof told him.

One by one, the passengers of the wagon got off, Hiccup getting some help from Ralof and Rahm-Ku. It was then that one of the Imperials, the people Hiccup was told often about, began to go through a list in his hand, checking off names as the recipients stepped aside in front of an execution block.

"Ulfric Stormcloak. Jarl of Windhelm."

As Ulfric walked away, Ralof spoke.

"It has been an honor, Jarl Ulfric."

"Ralof of Riverwood."

After Ralof left, the Imperial called the next name.

"Lokir of Rorikstead."

But the panicked Lokir refused to follow the others and ran past the Imperial and the armored-clad Imperial woman.

"No, I'm not a rebel! You can't do this!"

"Halt!" The woman called out.

"You're not going to kill me!"

"Archers!"

Hiccup closed his eyes as three archers fired arrows at Lokir, all of them hitting their target. The woman then turned to the remaining prisoners.

"Anybody else feel like running?"

It was then that the Imperial with the quill and the list noticed Hiccup and the others.

"Wait. You four. Step forward."

They obeyed as the man asked for their names.

"Who are you four?"

J'Kiir was the first to speak.

"J'Kiir of Elsweyr."

Then Rahm-Ku.

"Rahm-Ku of Murky Glen. Black Marsh."

Then Hiccup, at the urge of Renee behind him.

"Hiccup, son of Stoick the Vast of Berk."

Then Renee.

"Renee Silverglass of Emeraldal, Skyrim."

At Renee's introduction, nearly all of the Imperials and the Stormcloaks gasped.

Hiccup looked to J'Kiir and Rahm-Ku for answers, both who were just as stunned as the other natives of Skyrim.

"What's going on?" He whispered.

"Emeraldal was one of the major mining villages in Skyrim that was annihilated by a plague ten years ago. The last reports before the plague died out was that there were no survivors. And to think we were sitting next to the last survivor herself." J'Kiir answered.

The Imperial with the list spoke.

"All of you are defiantly an odd bunch. I still can't believe that you, Miss, are a survivor of Namira's Harvest."

The man then spoke to the woman next to him.

"Captain. What should we do? None of them are on the list."

Hiccup hoped that the woman would set them aside for questioning. But the captain had a different idea in mind.

"Forget the list. All four of them go to the block."

"By your orders, captain." The man spoke before turning his saddened gaze toward the four youths. "I am sorry. We'll make sure to return your remains to your homelands. Follow the captain, prisoners."

Knowing that there was no escape, the quartet obeyed and approached the mass of Stormcloaks while General Tullius spoke to the muted Ulfric.

"Ulfric Stormcloak. Some here in Helgen call you a hero. But a hero doesn't use a power like the Voice to murder his king and usurp his throne."

Hiccup wondered what in the world was Tullius talking about when he spoke again.

"You started this war, plunged Skyrim into chaos, and now the Empire is going to put you down, and restore the peace."

But then, a shrill roar echoed across the sky, sending a chill down Hiccup's spine. It wasn't Toothless, that's for sure.

"What was that?" The sympathetic Imperial asked.

"It's nothing. Carry on. Give them their last rites." Tullius answered, speaking to a robed woman, who Hiccup figured was a priestess.

The priestess spoke.

"As we commend your souls to Aetherius, blessings of the Eight Divines upon you, for you are the salt of the earth of Nirn, our belovedâ€¦"

But a single Stormcloak stepped forward to the block in frustration.

"For the love of Talos, shut up and let's get this over with."

Irritated a bit, the priestess spoke.

"As you wish."

The Stormcloak then knelt down with the aid of the captain's boot and

his neck rested on the block. As the axman raised his ax, the man spoke.

"My ancestors are smiling upon me now, Imperials. Can you say the same for yours?"

Hiccup closed his eyes as the ax came into contact with the Stormcloak's neck. He prayed to Odin and Thor that Toothless can save him before his head was cut off.

Ralof then spoke, causing Hiccup to open his eyes.

"As fearless in death as he was in life."

The captain then spoke again.

"Next! The Emeralda Nord in the rags!"

"Oh no! She means Renee!" Hiccup thought as he looked at the next chopping victim.

But the sound of the cry that he had heard before called again, this time louder.

"There it is again. Can you hear that?" The sympathetic Nord spoke.

But the captain shrugged it off and called out.

"I said, next prisoner!"

Looking to Renee, Hiccup watched as she approached the block.

"Looks like I'm next to enter Sovngarde."

Hiccup could tell that she was trying to add humor to this grim situation. But something about that cry just doesn't feel right. He watched as Renee knelt down on the fresh bloodied block and placed her head. But before the headsman could do anything, the maker of the cries appeared.

Hiccup saw in horror as a monstrous black dragon flew across the sky and was about to land in Helgen.

"What in Oblivion is that?" Tullius called out in shock.

Just then, the dragon landed on the tower overlooking the execution square. It was not like any dragon Hiccup had ever seen and from what he could look in its red eyes, this dragon could not be tamed. It was then that the dragon opened its maw and instead of a fiery breath, Hiccup felt a great force come from his mouth nearly sending him back.

When he opened his eyes, Hiccup saw the clouds in the sky circle and began to rain fireballs. The dragon then let out another unusual power that Hiccup had never seen before and sent the nearby soldiers flying, nearly doing the same to him, J'Kiir, Rahm-Ku, and Renee in the process.

This was clearly something that's like it came from a

nightmare.

Seeing that Renee was safe from the executioner's ax, Hiccup ran over to help her up the best he could.

"Renee! Are you alright?"

Renee stood up and looked at the dragon, which began to fly and circle the town.

"I think so."

J'Kiir and Rahm-Ku approached them.

"We've got to get out of here before we get killed!" The Argonian called out.

It was then they heard a familiar voice.

"Hey! Young bloods! Come on, the gods won't give us another chance!"

The quartet followed Ralof into a nearby tower, where an ungagged Ulfric and a few of the Stormcloaks were waiting. Quickly closing the door, Ralof spoke.

"Jarl Ulfric! What is that thing? Could the legends be true?"

For the first time since he met the man, Hiccup heard Ulfric speak.

"Legends don't burn down villages."

Hearing the dragon roar again, Ulfric spoke again.

"We need to move. Now!"

Ralof then turned to the four youths.

"Up through the tower, let's go!"

"At this point, there is no argument." J'Kiir spoke as he ran up the tower with Rahm-Ku, Hiccup, Renee, and Ralof behind him.

But just as they reached the top of the stairs, the five came to a halt as the dragon burst his head through the wall and breathed fire into the building, only singeing the top of the tower.

But there was one thing Hiccup noticed about the dragon just before he breathed fire: he spoke.

"Yol!"

Once he was done breathing fire, the dragon flew off to continue wreaking havoc upon the town. Looking around the area, J'Kiir looked downwards and called out.

"No choice! We'll have to jump onto the inn's roof if we are to get out of here!"

"Go! We'll find another way!" Ralof called out as he returned to his fellow Stormcloaks.

Renee then spoke.

"You heard them! Jump!"

She and J'Kiir jumped onto the straw roof first and waited for a wary Rahm-Ku and Hiccup to jump after them. Once they did, the four ran until they met up with the Imperial who had the list of prisoners.

"Hamming! Get over here! Now!"

The four watched as a young boy ran to the soldier and another man while the dragon landed in front of them and readied himself to breath fire. They got out of the way just in time as the breath came.

The Imperial then spoke.

"Still alive, prisoners? Stick with me and we may get out alive!"

After leaving the boy with another man, the Imperial lead the four through the streets, the five of them have to stand still once in an alley with the dragon perched on the wall next to them and attacking again at a different group, completely unaware of the five.

As they made their way through, they reached a building where Ralof was.

"Ralof! You damned traitor! Get out of my way!"

But Ralof spoke defiantly.

"We're escaping, Hadvar. You're not stopping us this time."

The four youths turned around to find the dragon landing behind them, ready to attack them.

"We've got to get out of here! Now!" Hiccup called out.

But when it looked like it was over for the six, a fiery white blast struck the dragon in the neck, making him miss his target. Turning to face the attacker, the dragon growled in its native tongue at a familiar black dragon. Strange thing wasâ€|the four youths could understand him.

Hio tahrodiis mey! hio Aav Voth joorie? Hio kos aan Dukaan Se faal dov! "

The larger dragon tried to attack Toothless as Hiccup called out his name.

"Toothless!"

The other five looked at him in shock.

"You are friends with that smaller dragon?" Rahm-Ku asked.

Hiccup nodded, keeping his eyes on the fight. Ralof then spoke.

"I don't know how you managed to do such a feat, lad, but we have to go!"

Hadvar growled.

"Not with you, Ralof!"

"Can we please just go before we die!" Renee screeched at them, making the men flinch a bit.

Seeing that there was no other way, the men lead the youths into the build, Hiccup calling out to his dragon.

"Toothless! In here!"

Hearing his rider, Toothless used his shot to temporarily blind the large dragon, giving him the time needed to escape into the building.

The black dragon screeched as it continue to wreak havoc.

* * *

><p>Translation 1: "You treacherous Fool! You join With these Mortals? You are a dishonor of the dragonkind!"*</p>

2. Escape from Helgen

****Chapter 2****

****Escape from Helgen****

I'm back with another chapter! I've never expected this fic to be so popular. Thank you everyone for your support and love. :)

* * *

><p>Hiccup breathed a sigh of relief as he and Toothless managed to enter the barracks that the two Nords, the Imperial, the Argonian, and the Khajiit entered in order to escape the dragon that was attacking Helgen. There was never a dragon that caused Hiccup to be so panicky. And that's with the Red Death and the first time he met Hookfang, his cousin Snotlout's Monstrous Nightmare.<p>

But there was something about that black dragon that just seemedâ€|horrifying to Hiccup.

Deciding to set his unraveled nerves aside, Hiccup looked to the small band of people that entered with him.

"Is everyone ok?"

Everyone nodded with Hadvar speaking as he looked around the room they were in. It was one of the soldier's bed chambers in the barracks. "Looks like we're the only ones who made it." He then looked to the stone walls as they heard the roar of the first dragon

continued.

"Was that really a dragon? The bringers of the End Times?"

The Imperial then looked to Hiccup as did Ralof and the three youths.

"How is it that you befriended one of those creatures? You better not be a Dragon Priest in training." Hadvar spoke warily.

Hiccup raised his bound hands while keeping a defensive Toothless from attacking the Imperial.

"No-no! He's not from here either! He's with me from my home!"

Rahm-Ku approached the Viking, trying to keep peace from the nervous Tamrielans and the foreigners.

"No one is accusing anyone of anything. If anything else, we need to keep moving. That other dragon could possibly topple this place any minute."

Renee nodded and spoke.

"He's right. Best to save such questions until we're safe from this place."

Ralof and Hadvar looked at each other warily before nodding in agreement.

"Very well. Let's get out of here first. Then we'll talk." The Imperial spoke.

"I agree for once." Ralof announced before ushering Renee over to him. "Come here, lass. Let's see if we can get those bindings off."

As Ralof cut Renee's bindings, J'Kiir allowed Hadvar to unbind him while Rahm-Ku allowed Toothless to cut his bindings with the dragon's teeth along with Hiccup, fascinated at the prospect of a trained dragon.

"Fascinating." The Argonian muttered.

Once they were unbound, Hadvar spoke.

"There. Best for all of you to take a look around. There should be plenty of gear to choose from. I'm going to find something for my burns."

Ralof kept an eye on Hadvar as the young bloods began to search around for what they might need. They found four sets of Imperial armor, but Rahm-Ku decided to tailor Hiccups, the Viking's small frame making the armor too big.

"I won't need any weapons. My magic is fine with me." The Argonian announced.

"Then I will take this dagger and longbow. If anyone finds a quiver

of arrows, let me know." J'Kiir announced, finding up two daggers and a longbow in one chest.

"Mind if I have the other one of those daggers, J'Kiir?" Hiccup asked as he was being fitted.

J'Kiir agreed and placed the dagger on a bed near Hiccup as the Viking checked to make sure Rahm-Ku's tailoring was agreeable. But as he checked Toothless' tail for any signs of damage, he found that the prosthetic tail had broken and torn throughout their fall and until they find a blacksmith's shop, there was no way the Night Fury could fly.

Renee approached from a curtained area, dressed in a female version of the armor and examining a small sword and a leathery shield.

"I guess these will do for now."

She then looked to the grown men as they examined a barred archway.

"Does that lead out of here?"

"I think so. I've never been down this way in a while." Hadvar admitted.

Once they were settled with their new equipment, Hiccup climbed onto Toothless' back and the small dragon followed the others down a flight of stairs.

But once they reached the bottom of the stairs, the path ahead of them began to collapse.

"Look out!" Ralof called out as the group steadied themselves while during the collapse.

Once the last of the stones finished falling, the company found their way blocked by the rubble. Growling, Hadvar spoke as he walked to examine the rubble before turning to a closed door that evaded the rubble.

"Damn, that dragon doesn't give up easy. Thankfully, that debris hasn't blocked this door."

Hadvar went on ahead, followed by Renee, J'Kiir, Hiccup and Toothless, Rahm-Ku, and Ralof. The room they entered was a storeroom and kitchen for the barracks as Hadvar stopped to look at the group.

"There should be some potions in here. Find anything you can carry and take it. We might need it."

Looking at the saddlebags on Toothless' saddle, Hiccup spoke up.

"We can store them in my saddle bags until we need them."

"Smart lad." Ralof commented before he went with J'Kiir to raid the larder.

Rahm-Ku, however, looked to the Viking and spoke.

"As long as we're in one place gathering supplies, mind giving that explanation. It would probably be best for the situation we're in."

Hiccup understood. It is clear that Hadvar and Ralof not only hated each other, but know each other as well. Also, the three young bloods, as Ralof called them, were still wary of each other, especially Hiccup and Toothless. And in order for any of them to escape from the city, they needed to trust each other.

"You're right, Rahm-Ku. I'll explain while we gather supplies."

So Hiccup told his story to the five, from when he was the runt and the laughing stock of Berk to the defeat of the Red Death and the opening of the Dragon Academy. Of course, they did ask the occasional question if the tale was real or not, but Hiccup repeated the same answer each time.

"If it wasn't true, then why am I riding a dragon here in Skyrim?"

By the time he was finished, the saddlebags were full of food and potions and J'Kiir found several quivers of iron arrows for him to use with his longbow. Ralof was the first to speak as they continued down the corridors.

"I must say, lad, you lead an interesting life. Fighting and training dragons on a daily basis, discovering new species—I am impressed."

"As am I. Hopefully, we won't need your dragon to fend off the other one. I'm not sure he can handle it." Hadvar spoke.

Hiccup nodded.

"When I looked into that dragon's eyes, it was like they were telling me that there was no way that dragon could be tamed. In fact, it was like they were telling me it sought our destruction for something instead of survival. Something like the will to destroy us."

"Well that answers my question." Renee spoke, disappointed.

As they made their way down the halls, the company found themselves in a torture room. The sight of the dead bodies almost wanted to make Hiccup vomit. Hadvar looked at the room and spoke.

"I feel the same way every time I come in here. And I am with the Legion."

"Then maybe you should consider changing sides." Ralof muttered.

"Not exactly the time to go over politics, you two." Renee intervened once again.

J'Kiir found something shining in a knapsack nearby and opened it.

"Ah. Good. It is always best to have as many lockpicks as one can

carry."

"As much as I am against thievery, I will have to agree with you, Khajiit."

J'Kiir glared at Rahm-Ku.

"Call me by my name and I will call you by yours, Argonian."

Renee groaned at the two beast men.

"Do I have to keep the two of you from killing each other as well? This is getting old."

As the trio argued amongst themselves, Hiccup looked to the table and found a single book with a symbol of a dragon on it. As he examined the book, it found it in a language different from his own. Pocketing the book, the Viking took a mental note to learn the written language of this land. But that didn't quell the feelings of importance he felt for this book. Maybe he could ask Rahm-Ku or Renee to teach him how to read the new language.

Passing the torture chamber, Hiccup and his new companions continued to follow Hadvar into the last chamber that was man-made. Around the room were several hanging cages, a small few containing skeletons and one with a fresh corpse. The stench of rotting flesh contaminated the air the living breathed. And there a wall at the end of the chamber that was broken down, revealing a cave tunnel that led further into the earth.

"We have begun construction of an extension of the barracks a month ago. When we broke down the wall, we found this tunnel and the captains decided that it should be an escape tunnel in case of an emergency. But I have not been down this far before, so I do not know what could be down there." Hadvar spoke.

Upon hearing this, Renee drew out her sword while J'Kiir quickly placed an arrow at the ready.

"The only thing we should be looking for is a way out of here before we get buried." The Nord girl spoke.

The Khajiit and the girl walked ahead, followed by Hadvar and Ralof, with Rahm-Ku, Hiccup, and Toothless lagging behind.

The corridor was a little snug, but there was enough room for Toothless to walk through until the escapees entered a larger chamber that had a stream run through the center. It was clear that the Imperials were the ones responsible for building the railing and wooden bridge that connected the two ledges to another corridor. This was like the sixth chamber he and the others had passed through and Hiccup was already missing the sun.

Upon entering the next corridor, the current leader of the group, J'Kiir, reached for a lever that stood still at the end of the hall, which was blocked by a wooden panel. Once he grabbed it, the Khajiit pulled the lever and the panel fell, revealing a bridge. But as they crossed, a rumbling sound caught Hiccup's and Toothless' attention above them. Realizing what that sound was, Hiccup called as the Night Fury charged forward.

"Get out of the cavern!"

Startled at his sudden call, the remaining members of the group jumped out of the way and out of the cavern just as stones and boulders came crashing down, destroying the bridge and blocking the way back into Helgen.

Ralof cursed.

"Damn it. Not going back that way."

J'Kiir then spoke.

"I guess we're lucky that didn't come down on top of us."

"We'd better push on. The sooner we're out of this deathtrap, the better." Rahm-Ku spoke before he looked to Hiccup. "Good ears, my friend. We owe you our lives."

Hiccup just simply nodded as he continued to ride Toothless through the caverns.

It was at the next cavern chamber where Hiccup not only got to witness his peers' fighting abilities and see an example of the dangerous creatures that inhabit this land. Upon turning the corner, the Viking's eyes caught sight of the largest spiders he and Toothless had ever seen. There were six small ones the size of sheep, while the four larger spiders could possibly rival the size of an adolescent Gronkle.

It was a nightmare gone worse.

No sooner that they had turned the corner that the spiders spotted them and, like the predators that they are, began to scurry their way towards the group. Toothless shot at the spiders, causing them to back up, while Renee, Ralof, and Hadvar ran towards the spiders, their weapons drawn. J'Kiir began to fire rounds of arrows at the spiders while Rahm-Ku used a fire spell on them. From his perch on Toothless' back, Hiccup watched as the ferocity of the Tamrielans decimated the spiders. It was Renee who delivered the final blow as she stabbed the last of the largest spiders in the head with her sword.

As Hiccup steadied his dragon, J'Kiir took out some bottles he grabbed from the storeroom and began to 'milk' a substance from each of the spiders' fangs.

"What are you doing?" Hiccup asked the Khajiit.

"Frostbite Spider venom makes the perfect grab-and-go poison to taint weapons with if you are in a fight that can't be won with strength, but craft."

"As long as it doesn't attract more of those spiders. I can't stand those eyes." Ralof spoke, hiding his shudder.

"What's next? Giant snakes?" Hadvar muttered in disgust at the spiders.

"I hope not." Rahm-Ku spoke as he took the lead of the group.

As they went down another cavern, the smell of fresh air assaulted the group's nostrils.

"We must be close to the exit." Hiccup spoke.

But Rahm-Ku, upon entering another large chamber, froze and crouched down.

"Shh! There's a bear up ahead."

Upon hearing this, the entire company crouched down.

"I don't know about you, Ralof. But I'd rather not tangle with her right now." Hadvar spoke.

"I agree, Hadvar. Let's try and sneak out of here." Answered Ralof.

Even though he had Toothless with him, Hiccup agreed with the men's agreement and whispered to the Night Fury.

"Let's just quietly get out of here. You've only got one shot left and I think it's best to save it for an emergency."

Knowing that Hiccup was right, Toothless carefully followed the Tamrielans and crept past the sleeping bear. They kept creeping until all seven of them were around the corner, where they were safe from the bear's senses.

Breathing a sigh of relief, Renee spoke.

"Phew. That was close."

Agreeing with her, the group continued to follow the smell of fresh air until they finally found an opening to the outside world.

"Looks like this is the way out." Rahm-Ku spoke.

"I was beginning to wonder if we'd ever see the light of day again." J'Kiir spoke in relief.

But as they exited the caverns, Toothless senses caught a whiff of something. Something not at all friendly. This caused the Night Fury to freeze at the cave's exit, leaving his Viking rider confused.

"Toothless? What are you-?"

"Wait! Hide!" Ralof hissed as he and Hadvar hid behind a neighboring boulder.

Following their lead, Renee and J'Kiir hid within the foliage while Rahm-Ku stayed at the cave's entrance with Hiccup and Toothless. Just then, the dragon that attacked Helgen flew over their heads, unable to see his escaped quarry, and flew off toward the northeast.

Once the dragon had disappeared, Hadvar signaled the others to come out while Ralof spoke.

"Looks like he's gone for good this time. But I don't think we should stick around to see if he comes back."

"Agreed." The remaining party spoke.

As they started to walk down the dirt and cobblestone path, J'Kiir asked a question.

"Pardon my asking, but where does this trail lead to?"

"To our home village of Riverwood. My sister, Gerdur owns and runs the mill there." Ralof spoke.

"And my uncle owns the blacksmith there. If we wish to separate, then it would probably be best if all of us rest at Riverwood for the night." Hadvar spoke.

Upon hearing that the Imperial had an uncle who was a blacksmith, Hiccup hoped that the man's uncle was kind enough to let him use his forge.

"If you plan to travel around Skyrim riding your dragon, I'd have him wait outside the village unless it is approved by the village." Renee spoke.

As Hiccup rode on with his fellow refugees on the road, he looked out towards the vast lands of Skyrim.

Although he may not know it, but this was the beginning of an adventure of legendary proportions.

* * *

><p>One of my least favorite monsters in Skyrim is the Frostbite Spiders. Not a big spider fan. XP

3. Riverwood

****Chapter 3****

****Riverwood****

_Here's chapter 3. This explains more on Renee and Rahm-Ku's pasts. J'Kiir will reveal his in a different chapter. Right now, it's just clues. _

_Also, a message for a Mr. Josh Prisco: Your email didn't show up on your review. _

I do not own The Elder Scrolls nor How to Train Your Dragon.

* * *

><p>When we last left our heroes, they had just escaped from the now-flaming city of Helgen and the black dragon that had caused it. Now, riding on his dragon, Toothless, Hiccup was following the Nord Ralof and the Imperial Hadvar to their hometown. With him are the three youths that escaped with him: the red-headed Nord, Renee

Silverglass; Rahm-Ku, the lizard-like Argonian mage-in-training; and the mysterious Khajiit, J'Kiir.<p>

They all thanked their gods that they managed to survive not only the horrors of the dragon and the giant Frostbite Spiders they had encounter in the caverns under Helgen, but their own execution as well. Now, they were traveling to the safety of the neighboring village of Riverwood and rest up. Hiccup wanted to continue traveling the world, but with Toothless' prosthetic tail broken and the threat of that black dragon still at large, the Viking could only hope that the Imperial's blacksmith uncle could allow him to forge a new tail without causing a disturbance.

As they made their way down the path, Hiccup overheard Ralof whispering to Renee about joining the Stormcloak rebellion in a place called Windhelm in the east, while Hadvar was trying to convince Rahm-Ku to join the Imperial Legion at a place toward the north called Solitude. As both Nord and Argonian refused, Hiccup turned his attention to J'Kiir.

"Hey, J'Kiir? What's 'Windhelm' and 'Solitude'?"

J'Kiir thought for a moment before answering his fellow foreigner.

"From what I remember, Solitude is the capital of Skyrim and the main hold of the Imperials. It is supposed to sit on top of a tall rocky formation overlooking the Ghost Sea, which would protect the city from the sea's harsh winds. Windhelm is home to Ulfric Stormcloak and no doubt the home of the Stormcloaks. I haven't heard much about it other than that they've separated the raced sections of the city into three: the Nords, the Dunmer, and the Argonians."

"Dunmer?" Hiccup asked.

"They are one of the three races of elves in Tamriel, who are also known as Dark Elves. Their most notable features are grey-black skin and red eyes that seem to glow. They are very strong, intelligent, and light on their feet. But legends say that they are ill favored by fate."

The Khajiit leaned in and whispered to the Viking.

"I will not say this in front of the Argonian, but the College of Winterhold had a large number of Dunmer mages until the Nords that lived in Winterhold drove them out. They still live in various placed outside their homeland of Morrowind, including Skyrim."

But just as Hiccup was just about to ask more questions, the people ahead of him began to slow down.

"What's the matter?" Hiccup called up to them.

"Nothing, lad. Just wanted to show you young bloods something." Ralof answered as he pointed to a collection of mountains across the river.

Amongst the rocky cliffs was a structure that exposed five arches to the travelers.

"See that ruin up there? It is called Bleak Falls Barrow. When I was a boy, that place used to give me nightmares."

"It gave every child nightmares, Ralof. All the stories of Draugr creeping down the mountain to climb through our windows at night, that kind of thing." Hadvar spoke up.

Ralof forced himself to look away, as did Hadvar.

"If there is one thing we agree on, it's that we still don't like the looks of that place."

The younger Tamrielans were also wary, but Hiccup was still confused.

"Uhâ€¦what are Draugr?"

It was Renee who answered him.

"They are the Nord undead. Walking corpses who thankfully reside in their crypts where they belong."

Toothless growled at the monolith as Hiccup felt chills down his spine as he heard about the Draugr.

"They can't possibly exist, can they?"

Renee placed her hands on her hips and spoke.

"You're looking at one who has more than often delved into crypts from time to time."

Just then, J'Kiir called out to gain the travelers attention.

"What are those stones? They have some sort of carvings on them."

For the first time since the fall, Hiccup dismounted Toothless and he jogged to where J'Kiir was. In front of the Khajiit were three stones that were indeed carved. The older men realized what they were and Hadvar answered.

"These are the Guardian Stones, three of the thirteen ancient standing stones that dot Skyrim's landscape."

"What do they do?" Rahm-Ku asked.

With a smirk, Ralof spoke to the Argonian.

"See for yourselves."

The four young bloods looked at each other before Renee spoke.

"I'll go first."

She then walked to the plateau that held the stones and named them off counter clockwise by image.

"Ok. The one on the left must be the Thief Stone. The in front of us must be the Mage Stone. Then that must be the Warrior Stone on the

right."

Making her choice, Renee walked up to the Warrior Stone and touched it with her bare right hand.

The boys and the dragon watched in amazement as what appeared to be a constellation on the image of the warrior began to glow as a light beacon shot into the sky. Both grown men nodded in approval with her choice.

"Ah. The Warrior. A fine choice, young Nord." Ralof commented.

"Aye. I knew that you weren't meant for the cart with the Stormcloaks." Hadvar added in.

Impressed, J'Kiir and Rahm-Ku followed Renee's lead while Hiccup watched with Toothless. J'Kiir chose the Thief Stone while Rahm-Ku chose the Mage's Stone, both stones accepting their touch.

"What do the stones do?" The young Viking asked.

"Many a thing depending on the stone, lad." Ralof spoke. "The Warrior Stone will aid the lass by gradually improving her use of swords and the like. The Argonian's Mage Stone will help him grow stronger in spell casting and the Khajiit's Thief Stone will, obviously, make him a better thief even if he isn't one."

"Are you going to choose a stone, lad?" Hadvar asked.

Hiccup looked quizzled at the three stones, wondering whether or not he should try them. It was Renee who saved him from the intrigued eyes of the men.

"Whether he chooses to use a stone or not is his business alone. And even if he's interested, there are ten other stones hidden throughout Skyrim for him to choose from. Now let's get to Riverwood before dark."

Mentally thanking Renee, Hiccup walked back to Toothless and decided to walk with him instead of riding him, allowing his legs, both flesh and metal, to stretch and move as he followed the others to Riverwood. They had little trouble during the trip, a wolf or two every now and then, but they arrived at the village before the sun touched the horizon.

Riverwood was a small town consisted of six, maybe seven buildings, the largest one clearly an inn. Upon seeing Hadvar and Ralof enter the town, Hiccup stopped to speak to Toothless.

"I need you to wait out here, bud. After what happened in Helgen, I'm pretty sure no one wants to see a dragon right now. The last thing we need to do is to cause a panic."

The Night Fury made a low grumble of protest, but upon remembering the black dragon that he fought, he complied and decided to look for a place to rest within a safe distance of the town.

After his friend left to find a place to rest, Hiccup turned to Renee and the two males who were waiting for him at Riverwood's gate.

"Hadvar and Ralof are speaking to their relatives in town. They said that they're going to explain the situation before calling us in to speak." Rahm-Ku spoke.

"In the meantime, let's set up camp. I don't know about the rest of you, but all of my septims were taken from me the moment I was arrested." Renee spoke up, beginning her search for firewood.

"I'll find some game for dinner. Since we're not going anywhere for the night, might as well stick together until the Nord and the Imperial come back." J'Kiir spoke as he prepped his bow.

Hiccup lead the other young bloods to where Toothless was: a small clearing in the forest near a mine that they had passed earlier and began to set up the shelters with Rahm-Ku and Renee. After Renee prepared the wood and stones for the campfire, Hiccup held up his hand.

"I've got this." He then turned to his dragon. "Toothless?"

Having done this before, Toothless used his remaining blast to light the fire, surprising Renee and awestruck Rahm-Ku.

After the fire was lit, Renee left to check on the situation in Riverwood while Rahm-Ku sat in front of the fire, waiting for his first meal in over a day.

"I hope that Khajiit comes back soon with some meat. I don't want to have to catch fish in the river and get my clothing all wet."

At the mention of the Argonian's distrust of the cat person, Hiccup decided to ask some more questions with his Argonian counterpart.

"Has there been any problems with your two races in the past, Rahm-Ku?"

Realizing that he had forgotten his manners, the mage apologized.

"My apologies, Hiccup. I keep forgetting that you are not a native of Tamriel. Our races have been in conflict several times in the past. Sometimes, the scars can pass down through generations. Much like the High Elves and the Nords."

Knowing that he had given Hiccup more questions, Rahm-Ku continued to speak.

"Twenty-five years ago, the Empire was at war with the High Elves of the Summerset Isle. Although the High Elves are great in the art of magic, there were those who wish to revive an empire of their own known as the "Aldmeri Dominion". The Thalmor are agents of the Dominion. The Dominion seeks purification and perfection. They are also arrogant, believing that their race is the best."

"Sounds like they're a bunch of prunes. Pains in the neck." Hiccup joked.

Rahm-Ku laughed.

"I'll have to agree on that. Thankfully, not every Altmer, the term for High Elf, agrees with such arrogance. I should know. I've had plenty of Altmer and the other elves reside in Murky Glen back in Black Marsh."

"What was your childhood like, anyway? If I can call it a childhood."

It was the Argonian's turn to raise a proverbial eyebrow.

"Why are you interested in my past?"

"I'm curious. Especially since I told you all about my past. I honestly can't tell how old you and J'Kiir are."

Rahm-Ku laughed again, realizing again his mistake.

"Ha, ha. A fair trade. Well, to start with, I am in my eighteenth summer and I am pretty sure the cat is the same age."

Hiccup figured that meant that he and Renee are the same ages as the Argonian and the Khajiit. So despite him looking older, Rahm-Ku was actually younger.

"Murky Glen was a small fishing village at the edge of Black Marsh and hardly anything happened there. It's the kind of place where everyone knows everyone and everything. I was the son of a fisherman and a merchant with four egg-sisters, two older, two younger. My egg-sisters and I learned the ways of the trade in my father's hopes that we would take over the business one day."

"But how did you find out that you had a talent for magic?" Hiccup asked as he leaned back on Toothless.

With a smirk of his own making, Rahm-Ku answered him.

"I was no more than seven when a family of Bretons came to Murky Glen. They were traveling mages and performed magic shows for the hatchlings in my villages. The mother of the family was a fortune-teller and sensed my hidden magical talents. She tested me for magic and after a couple of tries with various spells, I found I could cast Heal whenever I wished at a young age."

"After some persuasion to my parents, the family taught me what they knew about magic and I found myself wanting not wanting to become a fisherman or a merchant, but I began to dream of becoming the greatest mage of the Fourth Era. My father allowed me to teach the Heal spell to my egg-sisters and my mother was able to get a hold on some spell books for my hatching days."

"How did you learn about the College of Winterhold?" Hiccup asked.

"The father of the Breton family told me of the college when I entered my sixteenth summer. It took an entire moon to convince my father to allow me to pursue my dream on the condition that I'd wait until my eighteenth summer. That was no less than a moon ago. In the month of Sun's Height. As I had said in the cart back there, I was on the last leg of my journey when I was captured just for crossing the

border."

"Sounds like you've had quite the trip. It must not easy traveling from Black Marsh to Skyrim on foot." Hiccup spoke.

Rahm-Ku gave a soft laugh as he answered Hiccup again.

"You don't know the half of it. If we find a map of Tamriel before we go our separate ways, I'll have to show you where my homeland is."

It was then that Renee returned with a cooking pot and spit as well as a small bag of something.

"Talking about your life, Rahm-Ku?" The Nord asked.

The Argonian gave a friendly nod at the young warrior as he helped her set up the cooking pot.

"Indeed. Our friend from the far north was curious, so I told him."

Hiccup then looked at Renee.

"What about you, Renee? Where did you grow up?"

Renee fell silent for a moment, allowing Hiccup to remember that her home was taken by a plague when she was a child.

"S-Sorry. I didn't mean-"

But Renee held up her hand to stop him from rambling.

"It's alright. It's been ten years, anyway."

As she began to take out ingredients, she spoke. "Hadvar's and Ralof's families gave me these ingredients before I left. They are still explaining about Helgen when I left."

She then began her tale.

"As I have stated back in Helgen, I was born in the mining town of Emeraldal here in Skyrim. Our specialty were the emerald mines that honeycombed the land around the town. My father was a miner and my mother was a gem cutter and jewelry maker. The emeralds that my family mined and cut were considered valuable and we even once had an order from both the High King of Skyrim and the Emperor of Tamriel."

Renee then paused for a moment before she continued, trying to catch her emotions.

"When the plague came, it was like living a nightmare. For some reason, I wasn't infected. Thankfully, the townspeople were too sick to accuse me of being a deadra or a witch. I struggled to keep the town going while sending letter after letter to doctors all over Skyrim. But the Namira's Harvest was too much. My parents told me to leave Emeraldal before my immunity could leave me."

"And have you been back there?" Rahm-Ku asked.

Renee shook her head.

"No. I was actually returning to pay my respects and see if I could revive the town when I was captured."

"But where did you grow up after you left your hometown?" Hiccup asked.

Renee answered him with fondness in her eyes, clearly happy with her memories this time.

"After I left Emeralda, I headed to the neighboring town of Rorikstead for the night before I could go to Whiterun for work. As I got there, I've found that there was a traveling band of warriors consisted of Redguards and Orcs. After winning a fight with a buffoon who wanted to take me in to trade me, I've found myself with two of the warriors asking me where I had learned to fight. After a while and hearing about what had happened to my family, the warriors took me in as one of their own."

"What was the name of the warriors you were adopted into?" Rahm-Ku asked curiously.

"The Sabre Fangs." Renee answered nonchalantly.

Hiccup was surprised by the Argonian's reaction as Rahm-Ku jumped back on his tail in surprise.

"No way! _The_ Saber Fangs?"

Still trying to get some answers, Hiccup spoke up.

"_Who are_ the Sabre Fangs?"

Rahm-Ku returned his attention to the young Viking.

"Sorry about that. The Sabre Fangs are a famous warrior group that travels all around Tamriel. They are considered the strongest of the wandering warrior groups in Tamriel, mainly consisted of Orcs and Redguards."

"That's right." Renee spoke. "The Sabre Fangs took me in and taught me how to fight like an Orc and a Redguard, while maintaining my Nord heritage. We have traveled all over Tamriel and saw many sights. I've temporarily left the Fangs for a small trip to Skyrim, ready to confront my past when I was captured."

Hiccup leaned back on Toothless again as he looked at the red-haired Nord.

"My village would defiantly like you, Renee."

But before Renee could say anything else, J'Kiir returned with a large buck and a couple of rabbits.

"It may not be ingredients for Elsweyr Stew, but one can never go wrong with fresh meat."

Looking at the Khajiit, Hiccup decided to ask J'Kiir about his

past.

"Renee and Rahm-Ku have been telling me about their pasts. Can you tell us about yours?"

But instead of a straight answer, J'Kiir smirked.

"Guess."

Both Renee and Rahm-Ku gave the same answer.

*****Thief.*****

J'Kiir scoffed at the pair.

"Oh? And what makes you think I am a thief?"

"Well, for one thing, you've chosen the Thief Stone as your patron stone." Rahm-Ku spoke.

Renee then pointed to something on J'Kiir's face that Hiccup hadn't noticed before: A crescent-shaped scar over his left eye.

"And the last time I was in Elsweyr, I've heard rumors of a stripped and speckled Khajiit with a crescent moon scar over his left eye. The rumors said he was a notorious thief who stole from traveling nobles and ported pirates. He was known as 'The Shadow Stalker'."

Hiccup expected J'Kiir to protest about racial slurs, but the Khajiit instead smirked and began to dress the deer.

"Hmm. Guilty as charged. I've been a thief all of my life like my father before me and his father before him and so on. I've come to Skyrim to join the elusive Thieves Guild in Riften when I was captured."

"But there's got to be more to your past than that." Renee spoke.

J'Kiir then gave a playful smirk.

"Ehâ€|Maybe another time. If you are a good girl, Miss Renee."

Renee narrowed her eyes in annoyance at J'Kiir and it looked clear that she was going to smack the cat when Ralof and Hadvar came to the campsite with their families. The four adults and two children were cautious at the sight of Toothless, but Hiccup stood by the Night Fury which allowed the families to settle down.

"I see the stories my nephew told me are true. You have escaped a dragon attack with another dragon."

A bearded man spoke. Judging by his sentence structure, the man was clearly Hadvar's blacksmith uncle.

As the younger Tamrielans spoke to the family, Hiccup took up the challenge to approach the blacksmith, Alvor.

"Uhâ€|Hadvar told me that you are a blacksmith. W-would it be alright

if I use your forge to make a new tail for my dragon?"

Alvor raised an eyebrow at the Viking before looking toward his nephew, then back at Hiccup.

"My nephew has told me of your predicament. Although I am not exactly fond of the idea of helping a dragon after what happened in Helgen. But if he trusts you and your dragon, then I don't see any reason for me to say no."

After thanking the blacksmith, Hiccup followed Alvor to his shop in Riverwood while Renee and the others discussed the situation of the other black dragon, Toothless letting the two children approach him with curiosity.

"If there is one thing we agree on, it's that Riverwood is in danger of a dragon attack of its own." The Nord woman, Ralof's sister, Gerdur, spoke.

"Yes. Someone has to tell the Jarl of Whiterun about this." Alvor's wife, Sigrid, added in.

Looking at the youths they escaped with, Hadvar and Ralof looked at each other and agreed before speaking to the trio.

"As much as we wish to warn the jarl ourselves, we have to get back to our respective outfits. If it's possible, could you three and Hiccup head to Whiterun and warn the jarl? Riverwood would be very grateful to the four of you." Ralof requested.

Looking at each other, the trio shrugged their shoulders.

"Might as well. After all, I need to pass Whiterun to get to Winterhold." Rahm-Ku spoke.

"And I'll be taking the next carriage to Riften there, so why not?" J'Kiir answered.

Renee then gave her answer.

"Whiterun is my next stop before I make the trek to Rorikstead. So might as well warn them."

The Riverwood folk breathed a sigh of relief as Hadvar spoke.

"We thank you, young bloods. Riverwood will be grateful for this."

As they continued to chatter, Renee took the time to head back to Riverwood to check on Hiccup. The Nord found the Viking hard at work with the blacksmith in making a new tail for Toothless.

After making her presence known, Renee explained the request to tell the Jarl of Whiterun to Hiccup as he worked.

"I know. Alvor asked me the same thing. I agree that the black dragon back in Helgen is not something that can be ignored."

"Well that's good. The others and I were planning the same thing, since it seems that we'll be heading to Whiterun before we head to

our destinations."

Hiccup gave a half-laugh as he hammered away at a piece of steel.

"Heh. Looks like we're hard to get rid of to each other."

It was Renee's turn to give a laugh.

* * *

><p>Next time: Before they head to Whiterun, our four heroes and our favorite dragon take upon a request to get back a stolen item for a trader. This takes them into the bowels of Bleak Falls Barrow and the Druger within.

Please Review.

4. Bleak Falls Barrow

****Chapter 4****

****Bleak Falls Barrow****

Hi. I'm back. I was working on a couple of fics until my 'Fan Fic Mood Swings' swung to Skyrim.

I do not own anything other than J'Kiir, Rahm-Ku, and Renee.

* * *

><p>After camping out the previous night after their escape from Helgen, Hiccup, Toothless, and their temporary companions were clearing out their campsite while J'Kiir made up a list for their trek to the Whiterun hold. Their goal this time was to warn the jarl of Whiterun of the black dragon that attacked Helgen the previous day. Ralof and Hadvar left Riverwood the day before to return to their own outfits, so the young bloods were on their own for their journey. According to Renee, Whiterun was only a couple of miles away from the small logging town, so they should be there before noon.<p>

After he finished rolling up one of the sleeping bags that Ralof's sister gave them, Rahm-Ku walked over to Hiccup and handed him a bag.

Curious, Hiccup asked, "What is this?"

"Tamriel currency. These septims that Alvor and Hod gave us will be enough to buy supplies for our trip to Whiterun." Said Rahm-Ku.

"But why give them to me? J'Kiir's the one with the list." Hiccup inquired.

Rahm-Ku gave him a look that helped the Viking to remember that J'Kiir was a thief and that giving him their money was a bad idea.

"Ah."

As Renee and Rahm-Ku continued to clear out the campsite while Toothless watched them, Hiccup walked over to the Khajiit thief, who was starting to stand up.

"Ready to get the supplies, J'Kiir?"

"As much as you are ready to guard those gold coins from me." The Khajiit joked, although it seemed hard for Hiccup to understand the mysterious thief.

Setting the joke aside, the duo left the camp and entered Riverwood. As they walked down the cobblestone road, J'Kiir pointed to an iron sign on a building across from Alvor's forge.

"That is where we need to go. The scaled sign indicates that the building is a trader's store."

As they entered the building, a heated argument between a man and a woman assaulted the ears of the travelers.

"I said no!"

"Are you serious? Are you really going to let those thieves get away with this then?"

"The guards will handle it once they come here."

"By then it will be-!"

But the pair halted their argument once they saw Hiccup and J'Kiir at the door.

"Uhâ€¦We can come back another time." Hiccup spoke.

But the man waved them off while the woman left the room in a huff of embarrassment.

"Sorry about that. What can I get you gentlemen?"

As J'Kiir gave the man the list, he asked a completely different question.

"If I may, did something happen here?"

The man was hesitant, but decided to confide in the two outsiders.

"Well, to tell you the truth, some thieves snuck in here last night and stole something of mine. A golden claw. Last I heard, they've fled to Bleak Falls Barrow."

Remembering what Hadvar and Ralof told them about the barrow, Hiccup looked to J'Kiir, who had a very unusual gleam in his eyes.

"Well, my companions and I can get that claw back for you. We were on our way to Whiterun, but there's no harm in taking back something that was stolen."

Not knowing of J'Kiir's occupation, the man spoke in happy

surprises.

"R-really? You'd get the claw back from them? I-I don't know what to say."

It was then the man had an idea.

"How about this: get the claw back and not only will your supplies be on the house, but I've got some coin from a shipment I can part with you. It should be enough for you helping me and my sister."

With a satisfied grin, J'Kiir shook the trader's hand.

"Very well. We have a deal."

As they got the necessary supplies, Hiccup scowled at the Khajiit on their way back to the others.

"I can't believe you've just said that. Don't you remember what Ralof and Hadvar said about Bleak Falls Barrow?"

"I do remember, but this is an opportunity to make some coin and get some free supplies out of it."

"And to do that, we need to get a golden claw from a band of thieves." Hiccup spoke in a monotone voice.

"A little bump in the road, but worth it."

Hiccup wondered how much of a shrewd businessman the Khajiit was underneath that friendly-looking exterior. He was even beginning to wonder how much sanity the thief had.

Upon their return to the campsite, Hiccup walked over to Toothless as Rahm-Ku and Renee looked at them.

"So? Where are the supplies?" Rahm-Ku asked suspiciously.

Hiccup answered the Argonian with as much sarcasm as he could muster.

"Oh, we got them. And J'Kiir gave us the chance of a discount too. All we have to do is walk into Bleak Falls Barrows, ask some thieves to give us a golden claw they stole, and go back to the shop with it intact."

The Mage and the Warrior gave the Thief angry glares.

*****J'KIIR!***** **

J'Kiir gave a toothy grin as he backed away from the approaching pair.

"Now don't get mad. I agreed to this so that we'd get those supplies for free and we will get some decent gold as a reward."

"And to do that, we've got to creep around in a Draugr-infested ruin, take out a group of bandits, get it, and get out?" Renee asked.

"Pretty much." J'Kiir spoke with his cheeky grin intact.

As the two Tamrielans argued with the third, Hiccup began to pet Toothless.

"Something tells me the ending of the argument won't be in our favor, bud."

* * *

><p>Sure enough, J'Kiir managed to convince Renee and Rahm-Ku to go along with the plan and the four bipeds and one dragon were climbing up the trail that led to Bleak Falls Barrow.<p>

"Tell me again how we got into this mess again?" Rahm-Ku asked Hiccup, who decided to walk with the others, giving Toothless a break from carrying him.

"Because J'Kiir made the point that unless we want to get to Whiterun without having any supply problems, we have to get that claw back."

Renee then spoke to J'Kiir, who was leading the way to the barrow.

"You better wish we don't run into any Draugr inside. Otherwise you're on your own with fighting them."

J'Kiir was about to say something when he spotted a ruined tower up ahead, along with a trio of bandits charging at them.

"How about until then, we take these blaggards out?"

Upon hearing this, Rahm-Ku and Renee attacked along with the Khajiit, leaving Hiccup with Toothless. The Viking watched as the Nord skewered one bandit in the gullet, the Argonian incinerating another with his Flame spell, and the Khajiit taking out the third bandit by firing an arrow in between his opponent's eyes.

Hiccup couldn't help but feel nauseous at the sight of his companions slaying. Even though he has been around blood before, it was usually from an animal at the butcher's. Hiccup struggled with his nausea, knowing that if he were to take the title of chief from his father one day, he would have to get used to the very idea of slaying another human. Especially in this chaotic nation.

Once the bandits were slain, J'Kiir went to work on looting the bodies while Renee went to the tower to take out any remaining bandits as well as finding something useful for the travelers to use. Rahm-Ku, noticing Hiccup's uneasiness, approached him.

"Not use to being in a fight?"

Trying not to look at the bodies, Hiccup answered.

"I'm just not used to being around dead people. Especially the (gulp) recently deceased."

The Argonian gave a chuckle as he helped his friends past the bodies

and up the hill.

"It is not an easy thing to do, but you'll get used to it. I should know. I've never killed anyone until I got to Cyrodiil. Bandit. Had to fight for my life."

Soon after the mage-in-training told him this, Hiccup looked up ahead and saw Renee coming out of the ruined tower with a sack over her shoulders.

Once he and the others joined up with her, Renee began to list the loot.

"So far, I have found about one hundred septims, one magika potion, a couple of stamina and health potions, and I've found a couple of spell tomes for Rahm-Ku. Not sure if you already know them, but it doesn't hurt to check."

Rahm-Ku took the two books from Renee and looked them over. He lifted one, a violet book with a gate-like symbol on it, and spoke.

"I don't know this 'Summon Flame Antronach' spell, so I will use this."

He then handed Hiccup the second book, which was of a yellow color with an ethereal bird on it.

"That is the Healing spell I had taught my sisters back in Murky Glen. I believe you will find this useful at another time."

"I'll say. We're here." J'Kiir called out after a quick scouting trip up along the trail.

Taking the tome, Hiccup placed the item in one of the saddle bags and followed the Khajiit. Sure enough, just a little ways away was none other than the entrance into Bleak Falls Barrow.

"It looks like those bandits we've taken care of were the front guard. I don't see any other bandits out front." J'Kiir answered as he started walking up the steps.

As they reached the giant doors, Renee turned and spoke to Hiccup.

"As much as I don't mind your friend coming along, I know well of tombs like this and I can assure you that he won't fit passed the entrance."

Hiccup's eyes widened as he heard this.

"Are you saying Toothless can't come with us?"

Renee answered with sincerity.

"I am afraid not. The passages will only get smaller in width and I fear he won't get through. But we can let him into the entrance chamber so that he won't get cold."

J'Kiir then spoke.

"You don't have to come with us, my friend. Chances are there will be more things that may need slaying."

As much as Hiccup wanted to stay with Toothless, the young Viking's curiosity got the best of him as he turned to his dragon, who let out a grumbling moan.

"Don't worry, bud. We'll find this golden claw and come back. In the meantime, stay warm."

Hiccup comforted the Night Fury. As Toothless let out an accepting growl, Renee and J'Kiir pushed one of the large doors as Rahm-Ku peeked inside.

"I see two bandits talking at the far end of the entrance chamber. I don't think they've noticed us yet."

"Then I will take it from here." J'Kiir spoke, drawing an arrow and readied it with his bow.

The Khajiit then sneaked passed Rahm-Ku and carefully stalked inside. Avoiding contact with the giant rats and a couple of corpses of unfortunate bandits, J'Kiir silently made his way to the first of the two pillars that supported the chamber's ceiling. Then, carefully, he pulled back on the bow, bringing the feathered end of the first arrow close to his right jade eye. After carefully taking aim, the thief released the arrow, swiftly striking its target. And before the second bandit could process on what happened, J'Kiir fired another arrow and like before, the arrow struck its target.

Standing straight up, J'Kiir turned to the entrance.

"Alright. You can come in now."

Upon hearing the cat man, the three remaining adventurers and the Night Fury entered the barrow from the snowy outside, taking advantage of the fire made by the recently-deceased bandits. After they had warmed up, and J'Kiir looted the bodies, Toothless stayed by the fire as the quartet made their way into the bowels of the barrow.

As they walked down the tunnels, a sound began to annoy the Khajiit. The sound of metal tapping the ground. Looking behind him, he found the culprit: Hiccup's false leg.

"Does anyone have a small satchel to spare? Because with that maddening tapping, we'll get discovered quickly."

"Oh, like being sneaky is everything. I can't help it if my leg is noisy!" Hiccup argued.

But Rahm-Ku held up his hand and shushed them.

"Quiet! This can be taken care of instantly."

He then pulled out his money pouch and poured out all of his septims, leaving the bag empty. Then, after stuffing the bag with a bit of linen that was lying around, the mage placed the leather bag on the Viking's foot, finishing off with tying the drawstring tightly around the metal.

"There. That should do it for now."

Hiccup walked around the corridor, testing the new mute for his leg. Not a single tap was heard. With a grateful smile, he turned to the Argonian.

"Thanks, Rahm-Ku. I'll be sure to return your money bag when we get out of here."

"No problem." Rahm-Ku waved off as he pocketed his gold. "Now. Let's find that claw."

After walking down the hall a ways, Renee spotted something and pulled Rahm-Ku and Hiccup down by their shirts.

"Get down! Another bandit!" She whispered.

But just as J'Kiir was about to draw another arrow, the bandit, not knowing of his supposed attackers, pulled a lever in front of him and in a snap, arrows from out of nowhere pierced his flesh, killing him instantly. Blinking in surprise, the archer Khajiit spoke.

"Well. That was unusual."

The quartet walked ahead and J'Kiir examined the body.

"Poisoned arrows. Even if the injuries were minor, the poison would've finished him immediately."

Renee then looked around the chamber and approached three pillars at the left side of the chamber.

"He was killed before he could solve this puzzle. I've been in crypts like this before and..." She then began to turn the pillars, showing two snake engravings and one whale engraving. "...if you pulled the lever before you figure out the right sequence, the mechanism which fires the poisoned arrows will strike you down."

She then walked over to the lever and pulled it, making the three young men duck behind a fallen stone. But instead of arrows, a gate that was ahead of them opened up, allowing them to continue. The trio were stunned at Renee's know-how.

"Renee. How did you know that was the right order?" Hiccup asked.

Renee answered by pointing to three images, one on the ground and two up on the wall.

"It pays to examine your surroundings when it comes to traps like this."

Then then walked down a circular ramp and entered another hall, which was covered with spider webs. The memories of the Frostbite spiders came flooding back to Hiccup as a voice called from an adjoining chamber.

"It's coming from the other side of these spider webs!" Rahm-Ku called out as Renee, J'Kiir, and Hiccup began to cut the thick

webbing.

As the last of the thick webbing was cut away, the four charged into the chamber and caught sight of what Hiccup figured was a Dark Elf, bound up in wrappings.

"Look out!" The elf called just as a large shadow appeared from the ceiling.

And through a hole in the ceiling came a huge Frostbite Spider, one that looked like it had been in a fierce fight.

Rahm-Ku began to fire a new fiery spell that Hiccup had never seen before while J'Kiir fired round after round of arrows and Renee charged at the giant arachnid. Looking at his knife, the Viking began to feel pretty weak at the moment.

Well, weak_**er.**_

Eyeing the Dunmer in the webbing, Hiccup made his way around the battle, careful of the spider's legs, and crept his way to the Dark Elf. He was about three feet away when the Frostbite Spider turned enough to fix its eight eyes on the scrawny boy just steps away from his prey. In a rage, the spider, though wounded, shrieked its terrible cry and charged at the Viking.

Hiccup froze in fear as the giant spider dashed towards him, knowing that there was no way he'd be able to take out such a creature with a mere knife. With not enough time to evade the arachnid, Hiccup closed his eyes tightly and prepared for the venomous bite that would end him.

But it didn't come.

Instead, the teen heard another shrill cry from the spider before silence overtook the sound. This time, it was in agony. Daring himself to open his eyes, Hiccup nearly had a heart attack as he found himself mere inches away from the giant spider's fangs. Looking up, he saw that Renee had dealt the final blow with her sword in the head, killing it instantly.

As Renee jumped off the spider and J'Kiir approaching the captive Dunmer, Rahm-Ku, his hands cooled down after using the unknown fire spell, aided the Viking from his spot, careful to avoid the fangs.

"Are you alright, Hiccup?"

Clutching his chest, Hiccup waited for his heart to slow down before he gave the Argonian an answer.

"I'll feel better once we're out of here."

Agreeing with the Viking, the mage looked up from the teen to the Khajiit, the Nord, and the Dunmer.

"You did it. You killed it. Now cut me down before anything else shows up." The Dark Elf spoke hastily.

"Where is the golden claw?" J'Kiir interrogated.

Hiccup could see the elf was hesitant, but complied.

"Yes, the claw. I know how it works. The claw, the markings, the door in the Hall of Stories. I know how they all fit together! Help me down, and I'll show you. You won't believe the power and treasure the Nords have hidden there."

Even though they haven't known each other for long, the trio immediately knew that they can't go anywhere without J'Kiir dragging them to finish this treasure hunt.

"Just until we warn the jarl about the black dragon." The three of them thought.

J'Kiir, eager at the sound of some sort of treasure hidden in this tomb, pulled out his dagger and began to cut the webbing.

"Alright. Show us this treasure as long as you give us the claw in return."

"Deal, lad. Now get me down from here!" The Dunmer agreed.

Hiccup joined the cat teen in cutting the elf down, which was his original intent before the spider spotted him. As they cut the thief down, Rahm-Ku approached Renee and whispered to her.

"I don't like this. He's giving in way too easily."

"I agree. Something's up." Renee whispered back.

Sure enough, once the Dunmer was cut free, he gave a sly smirk and dashed down the corridor behind him, calling out as he ran.

"You fools, why should I share the treasure with anyone?"

Hearing that he had been double-crossed, J'Kiir's ears laid backwards and his fur stood on end.

"What! Get back here, you pathetic excuse for a sneak thief!"

It was then that the Khajiit dashed in after the elf. Rahm-Ku gave a half-laugh as he and the others ran after the two thieves.

"This is new to me. A thief chasing down a thief."

Ignoring the Argonian's remark, Renee and Hiccup focused their attention to the path ahead. With the twists and turns of the corridor, there wasn't a doubt that the Khajiit would have problems trying to aim an arrow at the elf. However, just as they passed a smaller chamber, the trio were halted by J'Kiir, who was standing still with his back towards them.

"What are you doing? Where is the thief?" Rahm-Ku asked, annoyed.

J'Kiir held up his clawed hand and shushed the lizard mage.

"He is being taken care of by something else."

As he said that, the trio looked ahead and gave off horrified looks at what they saw.

Skewering the elf were the dried up remnants of humans, most likely Nords. Their skins were intact, minus their fluids and bowels, and were so thin that their bones could be seen through the skin, their eyes gave off a bluish glow which indicated that they were alive, again. These were the creatures that they were told to avoid. The creatures that they hoped that they would never come across in this place.

Draugr.

Reaching for an arrow, J'Kiir readied his bow and fired at the three Draugr, each arrow hitting dead center of the skulls and sending the Draugr back into their eternal sleep. After they were safe, the quartet approached the dead Dunmer.

"This is what happens when you don't heed the warnings." Renee spoke as J'Kiir looked into the elf's pouch for money, a notebook, and a beautiful golden clawed foot with three engravings underneath.

The Golden Claw.

As J'Kiir examined their quarry, Rahm-Ku took the notebook and read through it with interest.

"These notes are fascinating, if not disturbing. Apparently, there is a hidden chamber deep within the bowels of this place. And this claw is the key."

As they looked at J'Kiir, they knew that they weren't going to leave this place without whatever it was the thief was after in the first place.

"Here we go again." Hiccup spoke sarcastically.

* * *

><p>An hour laterâ|_

The quartet made it to the Hall of Stories, after passing chamber after chamber of Draugr left and right. Charged with holding the claw and being the lookout, Hiccup was beginning to feel like a pack-mule while the others slayed the mummies with magic, sword, and arrows. Hiccup thought about calling on Toothless once they reached an area with an open ceiling to the skies of Skyrim, only to remember that the Night Fury was at the entrance of this place.

After taking a rest in the Hall of Stories, which Renee explained that the walls were carved with various stories told by the ancient Nords in carvings, the quartet looked at the door at the end. This door was different from any door they had seen, as there was a large lock that took up most of the slab. There was a stone circle that had three rows of rings above it. Each one with a different design. The one in the center of the door was no doubt meant for the claw.

Curious, Hiccup walked over the door with the claw as the others were going through their supplies. When they were going through the

barrow, Hiccup took a look at the carvings on the claw. They were of a bear, a moth, and an owl. Looking at the door, he saw the carvings were in a different order: a moth, an owl, and a bear.

Touching the lower ring, Hiccup noticed that the stone ring was loose. At first, he thought it was age, but after another look, the Viking noticed that all of the rings were movable.

"They are a kind of a combination lock." He heard Renee speak.

Turning to the Nord, Hiccup watched as Renee moved the rings until the pattern was the same as the claw.

"Now just place the claw in the center and it should open."

Looking at the claw in his hands, Hiccup placed the points of the claw into the indents in the center circle. After moving it, a lowed click was heard. Pulling the claw back, the Viking watched as the door lowered itself, revealing the hidden path. Hearing the door open, J'Kiir and Rahm-Ku sighed as they packed up the remainder of their supplies and followed the two humans.

On the other side of the puzzle door was a very large, open cavern, with natural light shining through. Instead of gold and jewels, it was stone and water. J'Kiir spoke in disbelief.

"We have come all this way for some rocks? That damned elf is lucky that the Draugr killed him and not me."

It was then that Hiccup spotted something up ahead.

"What's that over there?"

Curious, the four approached the other end of the cavern and lo and behold, there was a large wall with the most unusual carvings that they had ever seen. As if compelled by some unseen force, the adventurers walked up the steps of the ledge that the wall was atop of, passing a coffin along the way, and approached the wall. J'Kiir pointed to the wall and asked Rahm-Ku a question.

"Can you read any of that, Argonian?"

"Unfortunately, no. I don't know this language at all." The mage replied solemnly.

"I don't know this writing either." Renee added in."

"It's not in my language, if any of you are thinking that." Hiccup replied as he approached the wall.

Just then, a small segment of letters began to glow in a blue color.

"Hiccup!" The trio cried as Hiccup jumped back in shock, nearly falling over due to his muffled leg.

But they noticed that as Hiccup backed away, the letters dimmed. Curious, Rahm-Ku approached the wall before moving back quickly. Same reaction. Renee and J'Kiir did the same thing and got the same

reaction.

"I don't think it's going to hurt us." Rahm-Ku spoke.

"Call me mad, but I could swear that section of letters is calling me."

"I don't think you're the only one who's gone mad. I can hear it calling me, too." Renee replied.

"Same here, but with me!" J'Kiir exclaimed.

"Me too!" Hiccup replied in surprise.

As they went over what happened, the wall's silent calls became stronger and stronger to the minds of the four. Looking at the wall, the mage spoke.

"Perhaps this is meant for us. I say we approach the wall and let it do whatever it was meant for."

Too curious to be cautious, the remainder of the group agreed and approached to wall to the point where they could touch it with their noses.

As they did, their vision came to the glowing words and caught them in a trance. The light became brighter and brighter as a single word formed in their minds. When the light dimmed once more, they could clearly understand the word now, as if it was a language they knew from long ago was finally remembered. As they left their trances, Hiccup looked to his comrades.

"Did anyone get the word '_Fus_' like I did?"

There wasn't a single shaking head once the question was asked. They word they had learned was the same.

Fus.

It was then that the sound of stone slamming on stone caught their attention. Turning around, the quartet came face to face with a strong-looking Draugr.

"That must be the lord of the Draugr of Bleak Falls Barrow!" Renee called as she drew her sword again.

As the others left to fight the lord, Hiccup went over the word in his head, wondering what in the world happened. By the time he became focused, Rahm-Ku had incinerated the Draugr lord with the strange fire spell that he had used on the Frostbite Spider.

"If there is one thing I would love to learn about at the College, it's how to use the Firebolt spell without exhausting my magika."

"Everyone! Look at this!" J'Kiir called out.

They found him looking into the coffin, pulling out a stone slab the size of a small wagon wheel. On the stone was what seems to be a map. A map of Skyrim.

"Do you think this is what the elf was after?" J'Kiir asked.

"I'm not sure. It looks like Skyrim, but I have never seen these markings on any map." Renee replied, pointing to the strange marks on the map. "There is nothing there but wilderness."

"This is a puzzle." Rahm-Ku muttered before he voiced his opinion. "Maybe the jarl's court wizard may know something."

"Do you think he could help?" Renee asked.

"A court wizard would've graduated from the College. Surely he must know something. In the meantime, I say we get out of here."

Agreeing, the quartet of adventures followed the remaining path, which thankfully lead them out of the barrow and into the wilds of Skyrim. J'Kiir and Renee left to take the claw back to Riverwood while Hiccup and Rahm-Ku headed back to the entrance around the barrow to pick up Toothless, preferring to the fresh air than the decaying corpses.

Once all of them returned to Riverwood, they took notice that it was only midday. Which was a surprise to them as they felt that it was night instead of day. After all that has happened in the barrow, the four agreed to rest up for an afternoon meeting with the Jarl of Whiterun.

But little did our adventurers know that that little word they discovered was the first key to their destiny. The key to saving Skyrim and the world.

* * *

><p>Next time:

After the events of Bleak Falls Barrow, our heroes have finally made it to Whiterun. But when four unknown dragons attack the western watchtower, Hiccup and his friends will discover something that could change everything forever.

Please review.

5. Whiterun and Dragonborn

****Chapter 5****

****Whiterun and Dragonborn****

_Hi. I'm back! This took ten pages of Microsoft Words to complete. I just wanna point something out before we begin. _

There will be no romance between our heroes in this story. Hiccup is still dating Astrid and for those who think Hiccup and Renee should hookup, I'm afraid they'll have more of a brother-sister relationship along with the others. You will find out why at the end of the chapter.

Also, I must warn you that I'm not good with battle scenes yet. So if my scenes aren't what you expect, I'm sorry.

I do not own How To Train Your Dragon nor The Elder Scrolls. Just the OC's

* * *

><p>After the harrowing events in Bleak Falls Barrow, Hiccup and his companions were finally at the outskirts of Whiterun. It was mid-afternoon when they've arrived and not even the setting sun could cast a shadow over Hiccup's amazement at the sight of the city. Whiterun was a walled city surrounded by farms and a stable near the gate. Although he couldn't see what was behind the walls, he did see the parts of the city looking over it.

The second section of the city was comprised of homes; the taller ones no doubt belonged to those of wealthier families. At the eastern section of the city was a building that looked like an overturned boat. Even though he had never been to the city before, Hiccup felt that building had some significance for him.

And high above the city on the tallest plateau was a great building of foreign design to Hiccup's eyes. Its elegance and might could be seen for miles across the great plain and left an incredible impression on those who gaze upon it for the first time. Such as the gazes of Hiccup, J'Kiir, and Rahm-Ku while Renee looked on.

"There it is. Whiterun. Capital of the entire for which it is named."

She then pointed to the boat-building.

"That is the mead hall of Jorrvaskr. It is the oldest building in the city and the city itself was built around it and the Skyforge for which the hall was founded. It is the home of a band of warriors called 'The Companions.'"

Seeing Renee's glistening look as she gazed at Jorrvaskr, Rahm-Ku smirked.

"I take it you wish to join them, Renee?"

The young warrior chuckled as she answered the Argonian.

"Hmm. Yes. It was common for other guilds to join another one. And even though I love the Sabre Fangs, my Nord blood just dreams of joining the Companions."

Returning her attention to Whiterun, Renee became super serious as she pointed to the highest building.

"And _that_ is where we must go. That is the home of the Jarl of Whiterun: Dragonsreach."

As they were about to leave, Hiccup told Toothless to wait in the woods until they have permission from the jarl to bring him into the city? The Night Fury silently protested as he made off to a nearby clearing to rest.

But as they were about halfway to the first of the city's gates, J'Kiir saw something from the corner of his eye. Turning his head, he called to his companions.

"Wait! Over there!"

Turning to J'Kiir, the remaining three saw what he saw: a group of warriors fighting a large being at one of the nearby farms.

"A giant!" Rahm-Ku called out as Renee charged forth, sword and shield in hands.

"Come on! They might need our help!"

As Renee charged at lightning speed and Rahm-Ku following behind her, charging his spells, J'Kiir readied his bow and began to fire from a distance. Seeing how his companions charge into battle like this made Hiccup think they might be crazy and experience guilt at the thought at how weak he was compared to the others.

Her warrior blood boiling in her veins, Renee hacked at the giant's knees with such ferocity that she almost appeared demonic. It was a miracle that with all her flailing that she didn't get hit by any of J'Kiir's arrows nor the archer of the small band of warriors. The giant waved his club in anger, not caring what it would hit. The giant thrashed furiously until Renee leaped up and impaled the creature in the heart with her sword.

With a loud CRASH, the giant fell down dead.

As the Warrior began to catch her breath, her companions began to gather at the gate as the archer of the other group approached her. She was a fiery redhead that wore the revealing clothing, her bow withdrawn.

"Impressive. I have never seen anyone fight like you. By chance are you looking to join the Companions?"

The question was like a slap in the face for Renee. She had just told her company that she was thinking about joining the Companions only minutes ago.

With honesty in excitement, anxiety, and exhaustion, the young Warrior spoke.

"I-I was actually thinking about doing so for a long time. But I am not sure the Companions would take a member of the Sabre Fangs just like that."

She didn't know why she mentioned the Sabre Fangs before this stranger. But then again, stranger things have been happening lately.

The archer didn't seem alarmed. In fact, she was even more interested than before.

"The Companions will let anyone with skill in. Even from a renowned warrior faction like the Sabre Fangs. In fact, it would be an honor if you and your Khajiit friend come and join us."

Immediately, Renee realized what she was talking about.

This woman was one of the Companions.

"Renee! We've got to go!"

The sudden voice of Hiccup snapped Renee out of her stupor and made her remember that she was in Whiterun for something very important. A Life-and-Death situation. Returning her gaze to the archer, Renee spoke.

"I have to go. My fellow travelers and I need to see the jarl. It's urgent."

The woman raised her eyebrow, but nodded.

"Very well. Besides, if you do decide to join us, speak to a man named Kodlak Whitmane. He's the one who will decide if you're Companions material or not."

Thanking the archer, Renee rushed to join the others. Once she did, the group headed to the main gate, but was stopped shortly by a guard.

"Halt! The city's closed with dragons about. Official business only."

Rahm-Ku stepped forward and spoke up.

"This is official business. Riverwood calls for the jarl's aid!"

Upon hearing this news, the guard spoke, his helmet hiding his astonishment.

"Riverwood's in danger too? You'd better go on in. You'll find the jarl in Dragonsreach, at the top of the hill."

The guard then took out a key and unlocked the massive door that granted access to the city and ushered them in. But as they walked in, the second guard there reached out and stopped J'Kiir from entering the city, forcing the other three travelers to stop and look.

"You know the rules, Khajiit. None of your kind in the city."

But Renee approached him and removed the arm.

"It's alright. He's with us."

The guards were still wary until Hiccup spoke.

"Don't worry. We're keeping an eye on him."

It was enough to allow J'Kiir to pass through, but left Hiccup wondering about the relations between the races of Tamriel.

* * *

><p>Now that he was actually in the city, Hiccup marveled at how

beautiful and civilized the city was. As he and his fellow trekkers walked on, the Viking took in all the sights and mentally asked question after question.<p>

Yeah, he was quite the tourist.

As they reached the section of the town where there were market stalls, stores, and an inn; Renee pointed to a set of stairs that lead to an upper level of the capital.

"To get to Dragonsreach, we need to make our way to the Cloud District."

"Cloud District?" Rahm-Ku asked, also a foreigner in Skyrim.

Renee answered as she turned to the others.

"Whiterun is divided into three districts. We are currently in the Plains District. This is where the marketplace is and is called the Plains District because it the plateau closest to the plains of Whiterun Hold."

She continued her lecture as they walked up the stairs into the next district.

"This is the Wind District. This is where the people of the city who don't have a home above their stores live. This is also where you can find the Temple of Kynareth, the Hall of the Dead" She then pointed to the mead hall that she gestured to when they were outside the city. "and of course, Jorrvaskr."

"Kynareth?" Hiccup asked.

"The goddess of air, sky, and wind. She is considered one of the strongest of the Nine Divines." Rahm-Ku answered.

But J'Kiir scoffed. "You mean 'Eight' Divines."

He turned his attention to Hiccup and pointed to a priest shouting at the base of a statue of a warrior Hiccup almost thought of as a Viking.

"Since the signing of the White-Gold Concordat, the Empire was forced to oblige to the Dominion's demand that the worship of the man-god, Talos, be banned. While it is not a big concern in some of the lands, it's a big deal in Skyrim." "Why?" Hiccup asked. "Because according to the legends, Talos was born in Skyrim and was born as the first of the Septim Dynasty: Tiber Septim."

"But why does the Dominion want to ban Talos?" Hiccup asked.

"No one really knows, but personally, I think it's a plot to destroy the Empire indirectly with the Stormcloak Rebellion going on."

This caught Renee's interest, who, like all Nords, strongly believed in Talos.

"Do you think so?"

J'Kiir shrugged his shoulders.

"It's just a theory."

"But a plausible one." Rahm-Ku admitted as they continued onward to Dragonsreach.

But not before taking notice of a giant, dead tree growing in the Wind District. Like before, Renee answered the boys' mental questions.

"That is the Gildergreen. The sacred tree of the Temple of Kynareth. Supposed to bloom year round."

She then touched the tree, her eyes glistening with worry.

"But why is it dead?" "I don't know, but we need to get to the jarl and warn him about the dragon." Rahm-Ku told her.

After a moment of silence, the travelers then headed to the last district: the one Renee called the Cloud District. The warrior looking back at the Gildergreen with concern.

* * *

><p>Dragonsreach was a building that reminded Hiccup of the Great Hall in Berk, only it sat on top of the highest plateau in all of Whiterun. And the interior furthered the Viking's memories. There were two long tables that sat on each side of the pyre in the center with various doors and archways that led to various parts of the building. And ahead of them on the other side of the fire were a throne and three people around it, one of them sitting in it: the jarl.<p>

As the quartet approached the pyre, the third person, a female Dunmer, drew her sword and approached them, looking angry.

"What is the meaning of this interruption? Jarl Balgruuf is not receiving visitors."

Holding up their hands, the travelers held still as Renee spoke.

"Alvor and Gerdur sent us. Riverwood's in danger!"

But the Dark Elf did not remove her defenses.

"As housecarl, my job is to deal with all dangers that threaten the Jarl or his people. So you have my attention. Now, explain yourselves."

Hiccup answered her.

"A dragon has destroyed the town of Helgen."

Now THAT caught the elf's attention.

"You all know about Helgen? The Jarl will want to speak to you personally. Approach."

As she said that, the Dunmer withdrew her sword and ran up to the

jarl just as the four let their hands down and approached them. As soon as they reached the steps that led up to the throne, the jarl looked them.

"So, you four were in Helgen. You saw this dragon with your own eyes?"

The four of them nodded as Rahm-Ku spoke.

"The dragon destroyed Helgen. And last we saw, it was heading this way."

The caused the Jarl's eyes to widen.

"By Ysmir! Irileth was right!"

The jarl then turned his gaze to the second figure; a man the teens figured was his advisor of sorts.

"What do you say now, Proventus? Shall we continue to trust in the strength of our walls? Against a dragon?"

The elf, Irileth, spoke up to the jarl.

"My lord. We should send troops to Riverwood at once. It's in the most immediate danger, if that dragon is lurking in the mountainsâ€¦"

But Proventus interrupted her.

"The Jarl of Falkreath will view that as a provocation! He'll assume we're preparing to join Ulfric's side and attack them. We shouldâ€¦"

"ENOUGH! I'll not stand by while a dragon burns my hold and slaughters my people!" The jarl bellowed, making all around him, including the four travelers, flinch.

He then turned his attention to Irileth.

"Irileth, send a detachment to Riverwood at once."

"Yes, my jarl." Irileth replied in approval.

In annoyance, Proventus spoke before he walked away.

"If you'll excuse me, I'll return to my duties."

With Proventus gone, the jarl returned his attention to the teens.

"Well done, young ones. You sought me out on your own initiative. You all have done Whiterun a great service, and I won't forget it. But please, explain to me who all of you are and how was it you've come to Helgen at the time of the dragon attack?"

Deciding to leave the incident at Bleak Falls Barrow and the fact that J'Kiir was a thief out, each member of the four travelers explained in their own words about the incident and who they were. Hiccup was the last one to explain him and truthfully told the jarl

about his life on Berk and of course, Toothless. The sound at what the boy did surprise the jarl as he looked toward the others.

"Is all of this true?"

Rahm-Ku was the one to answer.

"We have only met for one day and so far, he had not stated any lies. Personally, I find Hiccup's talent extraordinary. Unfortunately, it's not enough to pacify the dragons that have begun to plague Skyrim."

Hearing this, the jarl sighed as he leaned back on his throne.

"An unfortunate matter, indeed. But maybe all four of you, not just you lad, could help someone who would be in need of your particular talents."

Then Balgruuf stood up.

"Come, let's go find Farengar, my court wizard. He's been looking into a matter relating to these dragons and the rumors of dragons."

The quartet then followed the jarl to an adjoining chamber, where a man dressed in a navy robe paced back and forth, only to stop when the jarl approached him. He whispered something to the wizard before leaving them with him.

Farengar then looked toward the teenagers with an analytical eye.

"So the Jarl thinks you four can be of use to me? Oh yes, he must be referring to my research into the dragons."

He examined the four before speaking again.

"Yes, I could use someone to fetch something for me. Well, when I say fetch, I really mean delve into a dangerous ruin in search of an ancient stone tablet that may or may not actually be there."

"But what does this have to do with dragons?" Rahm-Ku asked the wizard, expressing the curiosity of himself and his fellow companions.

Farengar raised his eyebrow before answering the Argonian.

"Ah, I take it none of you are mere brute mercenaries, but thinkers-perhaps even scholars?"

He then proceeded to explain.

"You see, when the stories of dragons began to circulate, many dismissed them as mere fantasies, rumors. Impossibilities. One sure mark of a fool is to dismiss anything that falls outside his experience as being impossible."

This reminded Hiccup of when Berk fought against dragons instead of training them, which they thought was impossible. He returned his attention to Farengar as the mage continued.

"But I began to search for information about dragons â€" where had they gone all those years ago? And where were they coming from?"

"So what do you want us to do?" J'Kiir asked.

Farengar gave his answer.

"I, ah, learned of a certain stone tablet said to be housed in Bleak Falls Barrow â€" a 'Dragonstone,' said to contain a map of dragon burial sites."

Remembering the tablet they had found in Bleak Falls Barrow, Renee and J'Kiir helped Rahm-Ku unstrap the tablet from his back and carried it to the senior sorcerer.

"We were just in Bleak Fall Barrow this morning and found this. We actually planned to hand it over to you anyway." Renee spoke up.

Hearing this, Farengar examined the tablet as it was being placed on one of the chamber's tables.

"Fascinating. Luck must be on your side. This indeed the Dragonstone that I seek. You all are defiantly cut from a different cloth just like I thought."

He then turned his attention to Hiccup.

"Now then. The Jarl said that you have trained an actual dragon. I'd love to exchange notes with you on the subject."

"Farengar!" The familiar voice of Irileth echoed as she entered the chamber, gaining the attention of the teens and the wizard.

After turning to see her in the archway, the teens and the wizard listened as she spoke again.

"Farengar, you need to come with me at once. A dragon's been sighted nearby."

She then looked to Hiccup and his companions.

"You four should come, too."

And if that wasn't surprising enough, the four looked at Farengar and were surprised that he looked excited rather than exasperated.

"A dragon! How exciting! Where was it seen? What was it doing?"

But Irileth locked his excitement away with what she said next.

"I'd take this a bit more seriously if I were you. If a dragon decides to attack Whiterun, I don't know if we can stop it."

As Irileth ran on ahead, Farengar followed her up the stairs. Wondering why should this concern them, Renee, Rahm-Ku, J'Kiir, and Hiccup headed up the stairs after them. When they've reached the top of the stairs, they found Jarl Balgruuf speaking to a Whiterun guard.

"So, Irileth tells me you come from the western watchtower?"

"Yes, my lord." The guard replied.

Irileth turned to the guard and spoke.

"Tell him what you told me. About the dragon."

The guard then proceeded, though it was clear that he was curious why there were four 'children' in the meeting with them.

"Uhâ€|that's right. We saw it coming from the south. It was fastâ€|faster than anything I've ever seen."

"What did it do? Is it attacking the watchtower?" The Jarl asked, concerned.

The guard shook his head.

"No, my lord. It just circling overhead when I left. I never ran so fast in my lifeâ€| I thought it would come after me for sure."

"And you are certain it was flying, right?" The Jarl asked, his gaze secretly turning toward Hiccup.

"Yes, my lord." The guard replied.

Sighing in relief, the Jarl spoke to the guard one more time.

"Good work, son. We'll take it from here. Head down to the barracks for some food and rest. You've earned it."

Thanking the Jarl, the guard bowed and headed to the barracks. Once they were alone, the Jarl took his attention to Irileth and the teenagers.

"Irileth, you'd better gather some guardsmen and get down there."

Irileth was quick to respond.

"I've already ordered my men to muster near the main gate."

"Good. Don't fail me."

The Jarl then turned to the quartet of teenagers, all of them mentally groaning, knowing what the lord was about to say.

"There's no time to stand on ceremony, my friends. I need your help again."

"Our help? What can we do?" J'Kiir asked.

"I need you four to gather your dragon and help Irileth and help her fight this dragon."

"Butâ€|why us, my lord?" Renee asked warily.

The Jarl answered in sincerity.

"The four of you survived Helgen, so you have more experience with dragons than anyone else here."

He then looked at Hiccup.

"Especially you, lad. Your clan has actually succeeded in training dragons. I know this dragon will be untrainable for you, but you do know what dragon weaknesses are. If anyone, we need your knowledge the most."

Hiccup gulped, being one of those times when he dismayed in discovering how to train dragons.

The Jarl then looked to all four of the Helgen survivors.

"I would never ask anyone outside my services, especially ones so young. But I believe that you four have a better chance than anyone in taking down a dragon."

The quartet wanted to protest, but remained silent. If it were anyone else, they would've voiced their concerns. But this was the Jarl of Whiterun. It's almost impossible to say no to a lord of a hold, especially when he was clearly counting on them.

Sighing in defeat, Renee spoke.

"Alright. We will, milord. But I wish to purchase a better sword and shield from the local blacksmith quick before I join."

"And I have Toothless waiting on the outskirts of the city. I'll collect him and meet the others at the watchtower."

The Jarl nodded at the humans' requests and thanked them.

"Thank you, young ones."

* * *

><p>After retrieving Toothless, Hiccup rode him on the cobblestone path to the rendezvous point where Irileth and the others were waiting. Before he left Dragonsreach, Hiccup was assured by the Dunmer that she would explain that Toothless was on their side instead of attacking them. That, of course, did not remove the apprehensive looks the soldiers gave off when he arrived. Renee, now donning a steel sword and a steel shield, approached the foreigners and spoke.<p>

"No sign of the dragon yet. But as you can seeâ€|" She then pointed to a ruined tower, parts of it in flames. "â€|he's defiantly been here."

Compared to Helgen, the damage at the watchtower seemed only like a minor scratch. Was it really the same black dragon that attacked Helgen? The Viking had to put his questions aside as Irileth ordered the troops to move out. Renee joined Hiccup with Rahm-Ku, his hands ready to shoot some sort of lightning attack; and J'Kiir, who had purchased a new bow and some steel arrows for the battle.

But as they approached the tower, a single guard came out of the

ruined building, calling out to them and not seeing Toothless.

"No! Get back! It's still here somewhere! Hroki and Tor just got grabbed when they tried to make a run for it!"

But a sudden chorus of roars caught EVERYONE'S attention. The guard, seeing where the roar came from, spoke in panic.

"Kynareth save us, here he comes again! And it looks like he's brought back friends!"

Sure enough, leading the way was a single dragon, followed by three more of its kind. And if one was a challenge, imagine what three could do.

"By Ysmir!" Renee called out as the soldiers began to fire arrows like madmen, Irileth barking orders as she fought.

To the surprise yet relief of the youth of the fighters, the black dragon wasn't among their ranks. But what further surprised them was that, like the last one, the dragons called out a battle cry in an unknown tongue.

"_**Thurri du hin sille ko Sovngarde**_" ** (1) **

Only one word were the able to translate: Sovngarde.

Instinct took over the teenagers as they saw the dragons. Renee was the one who voiced her opinion.

"This may be risky, but we can take them down faster if we each take one dragon!"

"Are you a madwoman? How are we supposed to do that?" Rahm-Ku yelled as he fired his spells.

"We'll have to figure it out on our own on that! Just find a weak point and take it down!"

With the chaos ensuing, the boys didn't have time to argue and charged at the nearest dragon toward them. Renee fought against the white dragon that was the leader, slashing and hacking viciously while using her shield to deflect the dragon's attacks. In the middle of their fight, the dragon spoke to her in its unknown tongue as well as her native tongue.

"You are brave. _**Balaan hokoron.(2) **_Your defeat brings me honor."

On the eastern part of the battlefield, Rahm-Ku furiously fired his spells, taking a break only to recharge his magika. Only his breaks were short and few that he had to ingest a blue potion that was made to restore magika quickly as he fended off a finned green dragon. Unlike the others, Rahm-Ku figured out the pattern of words the dragons use to attack. So when the dragon called out _"Yolâ€|"_, he was quick to fire a Frost spell, opposing the dragon's fire. After a few rounds, the dragon laughed at the Argonian mage. Surprisingly, he spoke in both his and the mortal language.

"_**Brit grah**_**. (3) ** I had forgotten what fine sport you mortals

can provide!"

Elsewhere, J'Kiir was firing arrow after arrow at a brown dragon furiously. The Khajiit was beginning to curse the day he was captured and forced into this predicament. He cursed further when his supply of arrows went empty and his dragon was still alive. Bringing out his knife, the Thief charged at the dragon, swinging his knife around. The dragon laughed.

"**"Krif krin. Pruzah!"(4)**

It angered J'Kiir further when he immediately figured that last word sounded like praise and began to stab the dragon furiously.

And in the sky, Hiccup was trying to figure out how to defeat his and Toothless' enemy dragon. All they did was dodge and miss four times when they fired at the brown scarred dragon they were fighting. As they managed to strike the dragon's shoulder with their fifth shot, the dragon barked in outrage.

****_"**Mal mey kiir. (5) **_I will make sure neither of you will see your next _**Koor!"(6)**_

Immediately, they knew that didn't mean good. Seeing the dragon's maw, Hiccup wondered if he could pull the stunt that enabled him to kill the Red Death three years ago. It was worth a shot.

"Pull up, Toothless! Let's show him what we can do!" Hiccup shouted as the Night Fury flew upwards, the scarred dragon following them.

As soon as they were up high enough, Hiccup maneuvered the saddle reins so that the dove downward. The Viking looked back and waited for the scarred dragon to open its maw. Just as he was about a half a mile to the ground, Hiccup finally saw the dragon about to fire. "Now!" The Viking shouted. Immediately, Toothless turned and fired his last shot into the scarred dragon's mouth.

Just like with the Red Death, the shot caused a chain reaction, severely damaging the dragon's interior. And at that moment, Renee just impaled the white dragon in its skull with her sword; Rahm-Ku just performed a similar version of Hiccup's stunt with his lightning magic; and J'Kiir slit his dragon's throat. As the four dragons fell, they realized who these children really were.

"**"Dovahkiin! ****No!**_****_

With loud thuds, the dragons were finally dead. Relieved, the four teens looked at each other from their dragons. But before any of them could do anything, a sudden jolt in all four caused them to look back at their dragons, whose flesh was disintegrating like burning paper. As they witness this, Hiccup called out to his dragon, keeping his eyes on the dragon that he killed.

"Toothless! Get back!"

Just then, ethereal threads came from the dragons and wrapped themselves around our four friends before vanishing, the quartet suddenly feeling a warm power flowing into their throats.

The memory of the word they found in Bleak Falls Barrow came back and, curious, each of them tried it once the threads have vanished.

_"**"Fus!**__" _

Immediately, a powerful force, similar to the one that the black dragon used back in Helgen, came from the four, the force knocking Hiccup flat on his back. Stunned, the four regrouped at the center of where their dragons have fallen.

"Tell me you just witness what I did." Hiccup spoke in surprise.

"I've seen it, but I don't believe it." Rahm-Ku answered in astonishment.

"What in the names of Ysgramor and Talos happened to us?" Renee called out in shock.

"I don't know, but I think we're about to find out." J'Kiir spoke as he pointed to one of the surviving guards approaching them, astonishment in his eyes.

"I can't believe it! You four are. You're Dragonborn!"

Confusion came to the travelers minds as Hiccup asked the question.

"Dragonborn? What do you mean?"

The guard answered.

"In the very oldest tales, back from when there were still dragons in Skyrim, the Dragonborn would slay dragons and steal their power. That is what you just did, isn't it. Absorbed the dragons' powers?"

"I don't think any of us knows exactly what happened to us." Rahm-Ku spoke, still trying to get a hold of the very idea.

The guard answered him.

"Well, all of you can Shout now, right? None of you ever had before now, am I not correct?"

As the four went over what happened in their minds, the other guards, who had joined them in the conversation, began to speak amongst themselves. While Irileth spoke to the youths.

"I, for one, do not trust in legends, but here are four dead dragons. And to me, it means that we can kill them." She then looked to Dragonsreach. "You better return to the Jarl and tell him about what's happened. Good work, you all."

After giving instruction for where to have Toothless land, the quartet headed off to Whiterun. But just as they were close to the town, an explosion of sound echoed from the tallest mountain, its force planting the five travelers and forcing them to cup their ears in agony with a single word. A word that would come to mean everything.

"_**DOVAHKIIN!"**_

* * *

><p>Next Time:__ Hiccup and the others learn more about the story of the Dragonborn and are allowed to stay in Whiterun for a few days before they begin their trek to the lonely monastery of High Hrothgar, home of the mysterious Greybeards. The Jarl thanks the Dragonborn by making them Thanes and granted them a home in the city. But before they can go anywhere, Renee wants to join the legendary Companions._

* * *

><p>Dragon Translations**

(1) My overlord will devour your souls in Sovngarde!_

(2) Worthy enemies_

(3) Beautiful battle_

_(4) __Fight courageous(ly). Good!_

_(5) __Little Fool-child_

(6) Summer_

6. Thanes and a New House

Chapter 6

Thanes and a House

Just a few quick things before the story begins. First, I do NOT intend to have Astrid (from HTTYD) and the other riders from Berk to come into this story until probably near the end of the fic near the final battle with Alduin. So quit asking!

Second, I only own the main game. I do not own an Xbox LIVE account, so I can't get Dawnguard, Dragonborn, and Hearthfire for the Xbox. Unless my brother gives me permission and the password to use his account and game cards in order to purchase them, I will not have their stories intertwined with this one. I like to experience the game before I write, so I can get the general idea.

I do not own The Elder Scrolls nor How To Train Your Dragon. Those both belong to Bethesda Game Studios and DreamWorks.

* * *

><p>When we last left our heroes, they were victorious against a dragon attack at the western watchtower of the capital of Whiterun. Renee, the Nord swordswoman; and J'Kiir, the Khajiit thief; Rahm-Ku, the Argonian mage-in-training; and of course Hiccup, the Viking Dragon Trainer; defeated each of the four dragons that attacked the watchtower in their own ways. But such celebration and ideas of

separation were dashed when the four mysteriously absorbed each of the four dead dragons' individual power. And according to the guards that were with them, it seems our four were apparently special people known as 'Dragonborn.'

Now, as they were at the threshold of Whiterun, a loud shout echoed from a neighboring mountain with so much power that the four of them had to kneel as they covered their ears in agony. The word being _**'Dovahkiin'**-**_** Eventually, silence helped stop the ringing in their ears as Hiccup looked to the mountain.

"What was that?"

"I don't know, but currently I am glad that I can still hear after that." J'Kiir replied.

"Aye. I'm surprised my ears haven't started bleeding." Renee growled as she began to stand up.

"I hope the Jarl can shed some light on this. First, this 'Dragonborn' business, now this." Rahm-Ku muttered.

The quartet agreed and while Hiccup flew off on Toothless to the place Irileth told him to land, Renee and the others began to make their way to Dragonsreach on foot. As they walked on through Whiterun, they took notice of the gossip going around town.

"Did you hear that just now?"

"What? The loud booming noise? Aye."

"Not that! I mean the rumors from the watchtower. Apparently, the four teenagers who went to fight there are Dragonborn."

"Dragonborn? You mean like in the old stories?"

"Aye. And four of them are found. I wonder what this could mean."

"I just hope it doesn't mean disaster."

The trio kept silent as they continued onward to Dragonsreach. Hiccup, on the other hand, landed on the an area known as the Great Porch and allowed Toothless to rest there while Hiccup joined his new friends in the throne room where the Jarl, Proventus, and another man were waiting for them. Proventus stepped forward, startled at the appearance of Hiccup walking in from the Great Poarch but addressed the four as if they all came in the front door.

"Good. You're all finally here. The Jarl's been waiting for you."

It didn't take long before the Jarl practically demanded a report.

"So what happened at the watchtower? Was the dragon there?"

Renee was the one who gave the answer.

"Not just the one dragon, but three more joined it. We, along with Irileth and the guards, fought fiercely. We are sorry to say that there were some casualties, but we killed the dragons. I'm certain

Irileth will give you a detailed report when she returns."

The Jarl sighed in both relief and exhaustion.

"Thank the Divines."

He then returned his gaze to the young Warrior, his eyes glistening with enquiring.

"But there must be more to it than that. I know you have said Irileth would give me a full report upon her return, but I must know. Was there more to the battle other than increased numbers?"

"Actually, there is one thing, milord." Rahm-Ku spoke, gaining the Jarl's attention.

"And that is, lad?"

Swallowing his already frayed nerves, Hiccup answered for Rahm-Ku.

"When we killed those dragons, something happened. I think we absorbed the powers of each dragon that we killed."

J'Kiir nodded at Hiccup's answer.

"According to the remaining guards, it turns out the four of us are something called 'Dragonborn.'"

This caught the attention of the three men, especially the Jarl.

"So, it's true. The Greybeards really were summoning you."

Now the four had more questions to ask.

"The Greybeards, sir?" Renee asked.

The Jarl answered them, despite him still trying to wrap his mind on the very idea that the four children before him were such legendary characters from old lore.

"Masters of the Way of the Voice. They live in seclusion high on the slopes of the Throat of the World."

"What do they want with us?" Rahm-Ku asked; his curiosity vast.

The Jarl answered the inquisitive Argonian.

"The Dragonborn is said to be uniquely gifted in the Voice â€" the ability to use your vital essences into a `_**Thu'um**_`, or Shout. If four are really Dragonborn, they can teach you all to use your gifts."

The Jarl then shifted his gaze from the suspected 'Dragonborn' to the far side of the fortress, as if he could see the mountain where the noise from earlier came from through the wall.

"The Greybeardsâ€"|" "

It was then the third man next to the Jarl spoke to the younglings.

"Didn't you hear the thundering sound as you entered Whiterun?"

"Heard it? Our ears kept ringing as we made our way to Dragonsreach after it happened." Hiccup replied with a hint of sarcasm, only to be given a glare from Renee and Rahm-Ku. But the new man laughed as he answered Hiccup.

"I don't blame you for feeling agitated, lad. Almost over half of Whiterun agrees with you. But that was the voice of the Greybeards, summoning the four of you to High Hrothgar. This hasn't happened inâ€|centuries, at least! Not since Tiber Septim himself was summoned when he was still Talos of Atmora!"

But Proventus interrupted the man's astonishment.

"Hrongar, calm yourself. What does any of this Nord nonsense have to do with our young friends here? Capable as they may be, I don't see any signs of them being these, what, 'Dragonborn'."

The third man, Hrongar, became angry at the steward.

"Nord Nonsense?! Why you puffed-up ignorantâ€|these are our sacred traditions that go back to the founding of the First Empire!"

Trying to quell the bickering between the Nord and the Imperial, the Jarl spoke up.

"Hrongar. Don't be so hard on Avenicci."

The steward then spoke.

"I meant no disrespect, of course. It's justâ€|what do these Greybeards want with these children?"

All four teens became irritated at being called children so discourteously. Thankfully, the Jarl came to the rescue again.

"That's the Greybeards' business, not ours."

He then turned his attention from Proventus to Hiccup and his fellow recently-discovered Dragonborn.

"Whatever happened when you killed that dragon, it revealed something in you, and the Greybeards heard it. If they think you are Dragonborn, then who are we to argue? I suggest you get up to High Hrothgar as soon as you can. There's no refusing the summons of the Greybeards. It's a tremendous honor."

He then looked on dreamily at the wall again, thinking about a distant past.

"I envy you four, you know. To climb the Seven Thousand Steps againâ€| I made the pilgrimage once, you know that? High Hrothgar is a peaceful place. Veryâ€|disconnected from the troubles of this world. I wonder that the Greybeards even notice what's going on down

here. They haven't seem to care before."

The Jarl then shook his head out of his trance before speaking to the quartet again.

"No matter. Go to High Hrothgar. Learn what the Greybeards can teach you."

The Jarl then sat up straighter on his throne, alerting the four teens.

"Speaking of honor, you four have done a great service for me and my city, Dragonborn. By my right as Jarl, I name you **_**Thanes of Whiterun**_**. It's the greatest honor that's within my power to grant."

Hearing that they were now christened Thanes by the Jarl, Renee was surprised while her foreign companions remain confused, but silent as the Jarl continued to speak.

"I assign you Lydia as a personal Housecarl, and a gift from my armory to serve you as your badges of office."

The Jarl then whispered something to Proventus, who then left with four guards to the upper parts of the fortress, returning with hand-axe, a metal bow with feather-like designs on it, a green and brown dagger that looked crude, but sharper than a sword; and a set of clothing with twelve books stacked on them. The books were in sets of two and arranged by color. There were two purple books, two grey books, two orange books, two yellow books, two red books, and a maroon book and a green book that both looked poorly put together.

Seeing the books, the Jarl spoke in surprise as he recognized the holder.

"Farengar. What with all of those books? I called for the robes."

The court wizard answered the Jarl.

"A thank-you and payments on my behalf. I have seen the dragon that is perched on the Great Poarch had a saddle on its back. I am thankful for them saving Whiterun, but I also wish to learn of this ally dragon and the dragons the foreigner from the far north is familiar with."

Exasperation rose in Hiccup while Rahm-Ku was in agreement with Farengar, leaving Renee and J'Kiir sympathetic to the young Viking. Balgruuf sighed as he spoke to the Viking.

"I am sorry. Farengar tends to be a bitâ€|enthusiastic about the subject of dragons. I may have to ask that you and your fellow Dragonborn stay in Whiterun for a few days. You are free to stay in the house I also included in your gifts."

Looking at Renee, Hiccup sighed before he answered the Jarl.

"That's alright. If I talk more about the dragons from my homeland, then maybe I can contact my father and tell him to send

reinforcements without upsetting the people of Skyrim. Besides, we have a few errands here that may take a while to complete."

Renee knew what he meant. He was talking about her joining the Companions while discovering what happened to the Gildergreen.

"Very well. I will notify the guards of your new titles and of your unusual friend. Wouldn't want them to think you're part of the common rabble, now would we? Your new home is unfurnished, so speak to Proventus about furnishing the place. I will also have some carpenters build an extension so that your dragon could stay. We are honored to have you as Thanes of our city, Dragonborn." The Jarl spoke one last time before dismissing the Dragonborn to turn to matters of state.

After thanking the Jarl, the quartet made their way to the front door, still trying to wrap their heads about being Dragonborn and becoming Thanes. But the boys in the group were trying to figure out just exactly what a Thane was. But before they could ask Renee, a woman just several years older than them approached them. She had shoulder-length brown hair and was dressed in short-sleeved metal armor. She carried a shield and had a sword attached to her belt.

The woman spoke as she approached them.

"Pardon me. But the Jarl has appointed me as your housecarl. It's an honor to serve you, my Thanes."

"I take it your name is Lydia?" Hiccup asked.

The woman nodded, letting the teens know that Hiccup was right. Rahm-Ku then asked Lydia a question.

"What exactly is a Thane and what does a housecarl do?"

Lydia answered her Argonian Thane.

"The title of Thane is given to those who earn the right to be called that. It's the rank second to the title of Jarl. By defeating the dragons at the watchtower, the Jarl has seen fit to call you Thanes. Fully recognized heroes of Whiterun so to say. And as for what a housecarl does; as my Thanes, I'm sworn to your service. I'll guard you and all you own, with my life."

Lydia then turned to the doors and ushered the new Thanes forward.

"Come. I will lead you to your Whiterun home."

Nodding at each other, the Dragonborn followed Lydia out of Dragonsreach and into the town. Wanting to see where their new home was before she could head to either Jorrvaskr or the Temple of Kynareth, Renee kept her focus on their housecarl as they walked down from the Cloud District, past the Wind District, all the way to the Plains District. They walked until Lydia was in front of the door of a large house that was nestled between the blacksmith's shop and the general store.

Pulling a key from her pouch, Lydia unlocked the door and opened it

as she spoke.

"Welcome to Breezehome, My Thanes."

Following Lydia, the Dragonborn entered the house and were met by dust. The interior of Breezehome was less kept than the outside, with dust and cobwebs covering every nook and cranny. Rahm-Ku dared himself up the dusty stairs to see what the rooms were like, and found there were only two rooms, one for the housecarl and one Thane. The beds were frames with prickly hay for a mattress.

After the Argonian relayed his discovery, three of the Dragonborn and Lydia walked outside and allowed clean air to enter their lungs, while J'Kiir worked on opening every window in the house. Coughing, he spoke from one window.

"How long was this place empty? Since the Oblivion Crisis?"

After the new homeowners stopped coughing, Rahm-Ku spoke.

"Looks like the rest of us are going to be busy. You can go and join the Companions, Renee. I'll look for some work to get the place furnished while Lydia and the cat can clean."

J'Kiir hissed at Rahm-Ku as Hiccup got in between them, trying to prevent a fight, even though J'Kiir was still in the window. Lydia only nodded and spoke.

"As you wish, Thane Rahm-Ku."

"What about Hiccup?" Renee asked, catching both the Viking and the Argonian's attention. Hiccup answered an exasperated tone.

"I'll be going back to Dragonsreach and try and keep Farengar from dissecting Toothless. I may be gone all day, so don't wait up."

In agreement, the quintet began their assigned duties. But little did the Dragonborn know that Daedric influences are watching them, in particular Renee and J'Kiirâ€¦for the moment.

* * *

><p>NEXT TIME: _Renee joins up with the Companions and her first mission is the one she had been wanting to start with ever since she arrived in Whiterun: restore the Gildergreen. And while Renee is off to save a tree and Hiccup and Rahm-Ku are busy, J'Kiir stumbles across rumors about the Jarl's youngest son and will soon will be the first to encounter one of the Daedric Princes of Oblivion: __**Mephala.**_

I did some papers for the plot and I figured out which Daedric Princes goes with which Dragonborn. But we'll start with Mephala, as she is the closest Daedric Prince at the moment. It will mostly be a Renee and J'Kiir chapter. Rahm-Ku and Hiccup will get the next one when Renee is gone again.

7. The Gildergreen and the Whispering Door

Chapter 7

****The Gildergreen and the Whispering Door****

_I have returned! Sorry for the wait. I had some Writer's Blocks I had to crack. A__nyway, Here's the next chapter. _

Also, I like to thank Yuvon-Dovah Ray and Quintian- The Dovahkiin Dwarf for being dovah translators that helped me with editing the first chapter. Thank you both.

Oh! Before I forget, I know I said I wasn't going to do them, but I've been asked again to do Dragonborn and Dawnguard and now I have a poll up. Go to my bio and vote if I should do them or not after the Alduin Arc? The poll ends in a couple of months.

I do not own How to Train Your Dragon nor The Elder Scrolls.

* * *

><p>Last time, Hiccup and his new friends found out they are a group of special beings known as Dragonborn and were made Thanes of Whiterun after saving the city from a dragon attack. As one of the gifts that the Jarl bestowed on them, the Dragonborn were led by their recently-employed housecarl, Lydia, to their new house: Breezehome. While J'Kiir was forced to stay behind to clean the place with Lydia, Rahm-Ku went out to look for work and Hiccup returned to Dragonsreach to exchange dragon words with the court wizard, Farengar. But this story starts with Renee.<p>

Renee left Breezehome with Hiccup, who was on his way to Dragonsreach. Once they have reached the Gildergreen, Renee bid Hiccup a farewell and good luck while she headed up the steps to Jorrvaskr. Her heart raced as she got closer to the legendary mead hall, but her heart wasn't as fast as it was when she was fighting that dragon at the watchtower.

After opening the door, the sound of a fistfight reached Renee's ears. Looking to her left, she saw a Dunmer and a Nord have at each other in a fistfight. The fight was spectated by a large group of warriors of various races and they were cheering on to their favorite fighter. The only one who didn't join in the spectacle was an elderly woman who was sweeping next to some stairs that led to a lower section of Jorrvaskr. Casually, Renee approached the woman and spoke.

"Excuse me, ma'am. Can you tell me where I can find a Kodlak Whitemane?"

"Oh yes. He's just down the stairs and down the hall, dearie." The old woman replied.

Thanking the woman, Renee walked down the stairs and passed through another set of doors, leaving the fight above.

Down below was obviously the Companions' barracks, for as Renee walked down the hall, every room she saw had at least one bed in it. She turned her attention as she began to overhear a conversation between an elderly, bearded man and a younger man with short, brown hair. The second man spoke with concern to the elder.

"But I still here the call of the blood." "We all do. It is our burden to bear. But we can overcome." The elder spoke before he took notice of Renee. "A stranger comes to our hall."

Clearing her throat, Renee stepped forward and spoke.

"I'm looking to join the Companions. I was told to speak with a Kodlak Whitemane."

The elder then spoke.

"Aye. I am he, lass. And you are?"

"Renee Silverglass. I came here with four friends of mine."

Kodlak then looked at Renee for a moment, examining her. Shortly, he spoke again.

"Hm. Yes, perhaps. A certain strength of spirit."

It was then the other man spoke.

"Master, you're not truly considering accepting her?"

Kodlak answered the man with strength and wisdom in his eyes.

"I am nobody's master, Vilkas. And last I checked, we had some empty beds in Jorrvaskr for those with a fire burning in their hearts."

The man, Vilkas, then spoke.

"Apologies. But perhaps this isn't the time. I've never even heard of this outsider."

The elder looked on to Renee and explained what Vilkas was talking about to her.

"Sometimes the famous come to us. Sometimes men and women come here to seek their fame. It makes no difference. What matters is their heart."

"And their arm." Vilkas added in, still doubting Renee.

Kodlak nodded and spoke to Renee again.

"Of course. How are you in a battle, lass?"

Renee answered truthfully.

"I have grown up with the Sabre Fangs across Tamriel. While they have taught me how to fight, I still have a lot to learn."

The elder smiled as he nodded in approval.

"Now that's what I like to hear. Honesty."

He then turned to Vilkas once again.

"Vilkas, take her out to the yard and see what she can do."

"Aye." Vilkas answered simply before standing up and walking past Renee.

The young Nord found his attitude irritating and is eager to prove herself. Thanking Kodlak for finding the time to speak with her, Renee hurried down the corridor and followed Vilkas up the stairs and out the doors opposite the ones she came in.

Upon entering the outside again, Renee found herself in a small courtyard adorned with targets and dummies. As they reached the cobblestone, Vilkas spoke.

"The old man said to have a look at you, so let's do this."

As Vilkas drew his sword, so did Renee with her own sword and shield. Immediately, the two charged at each other. Vilkas swung his sword at Renee, only to be blocked by her shield. Remembering what she was taught, Renee tested Vilkas' defenses by swinging her sword a few times, and all of them were blocked by either sword or shield. Once she saw the pattern, Renee lifted her sword up again, making Vilkas believe that she was going to strike again, only to find himself charged to the ground as Renee used her shield to block any attacks as she rammed him, his sword flying from his hand.

As Renee stood up, Vilkas, seeing his defeat, spoke.

"Not bad. Next time won't be so easy."

Renee was debating if that was a compliment or not as Vilkas stood up and retrieved his sword, still speaking.

"You might just make it. But for now, you're still a whelp to us, new blood. So you do what we tell you."

He then handed Renee his sword.

"Here's my sword. Go and take it up to Eorlund to have it sharpened. And be careful, it's probably worth more than you are."

As Vilkas left, Renee withheld the urge to stick her tongue out at his back and headed up towards a large statue of an eagle. She had heard about this forge from the members of the Sabre Fangs. This was the legendary Skyforge, which was older than even men and mer. According to legend, all of Whiterun, not just Jorrvaskr, was said to be founded around the Skyforge instead of the other way around. It is also where weapons made of Skyforge Steel were created.

Having nearly forgotten about her 'errand', Renee headed up the steps of the Skyforge and saw what appeared to be a regular forge at the statue's feet. And hammering away at a piece of heated metal was another elderly man, one who many in the way of the blade knew was the fabled Eorlund Grey-Mane. Approaching the blacksmith, Renee cleared her throat, gaining his attention while he worked on the steel.

"Yes? What brings you to the Skyforge, lass?"

"Vilkas sent me with his sword. He wants it to be sharpened." Renee answered.

At the moment, Eorlund stopped working and looked up to Renee, now recognizing her.

"I'm guessing you're the newcomer then?"

Renee nodded before asking a question of her own.

"Does Vilkas always send newcomers on errands?"

"Oh, don't worry too much about it. They were all whelps once. They just might not like to talk about it. And don't always just do what you're told. Nobody rules anybody in the Companions."

This statement confused Renee a bit.

"But someone has to be in charge, though."

Eorlund stroked his beard before he answered her inquiry.

"Well, I'm not sure how they've managed it, but they have. No leaders since Ysgramor. Kodlak is the Harbinger, and he's a sort of advisor for the whole group, but every man is his own. Every woman, her own."

"I see. Thank you."

But just as Renee was about to leave, Eorlund stopped her.

"Hold it. I have a favor to ask."

Renee turned to the blacksmith and gave him a puzzled look.

"A favor?"

"I've been working on a shield for Aela. My wife is in mourning and I need to get back to her soon. I'd be much obliged if you could take the shield to Aela for me."

Seeing that the man was asking her an actual favor and not an order given to her like with Vilkas, Renee nodded and accepted the favor.

"That's a good lass." Eorlund replied with gratitude.

After being given the shield, Renee headed down to Jorrvaskr until a thought popped into her mind: she didn't know who Aela was. Not wanting to bother Eorlund, Renee headed inside and asked the nearest Companion, the Dunmer from the fistfight that ended while she was meeting Kodlak, and asked her question.

"Excuse me. But can you tell me where I can find an Aela?"

"Sure, lass. She's down the stairs, second hallway to your left."

Thanking the Dunmer, Renee headed back down to the barracks and followed the path she was directed too. It didn't take her long until she found the archer she had spoken to outside Whiterun speaking with another, armored man.

Knocking on the open door, Renee caught the attention of both Companions.

"Excuse me, but I have a shield for an Aela?"

The archer, hearing the name, spoke.

"Ah, good. I've been waiting for this."

While she took the shield, Aela took a look at Renee and recognized her.

"Waitâ€¦I remember you. So the old man thinks you've got some heart, I guess."

The man, whom Aela was talking to earlier, spoke.

"You know this one? I saw her training in the yard with Vilkas."

Hearing this, Aela smirked.

"Ah, yes. I heard you gave him quite a thrashing."

"Don't let Vilkas catch you saying that." The man spoke with a smirk.

Aela then asked Renee a serious question.

"Do you think you could handle Vilkas in a real fight?"

Renee folded her arms as she once again spoke with honesty.

"I don't care for boasting."

Aela nodded in approval.

"That's what I like to hear. A woman who lets her actions speak for her." She then spoke of a different subject. "Here, let's have Farkas show you where you'll be resting your head."

But Renee shook her head.

"Oh, there's no need. I've actually just been given a home here in Whiterun an hour ago."

"Maybe so, but it is always a good idea to have a second bunk around just in case." Aela answered as the man called for Farkas.

Just then, a man who looks like a scruffier version of Vilkas appeared from the corridor. It was the same man who helped Aela took down the giant earlier.

"Did you call me?"

"Of course we did, icebrain. Show this new blood where the rest of the whelps sleep."

The new man, Farkas, gave a confused look before noticing

Renee.

"New blood? Oh. I remember you. Come on, follow me."

Nodding at Aela and the other man, Renee followed Farkas down the corridor. As they walked, Farkas spoke.

"Skjor and Aela like to tease me, but they're good people. They challenge us to do our best."

After a bit more silence, he spoke again.

"Nice to have a new face around. It gets boring here sometimes. I hope we keep you. This can be a rough life."

"_He makes it sound like I'm a puppy being adopted." _Renee thought to herself.

Reaching the end of the hall, Farkas turned to the right and spoke.

"The quarters are up here. Just pick a bed and fall in it when you're tired. Tilma will keep the place clean. She always has."

He then stopped and turned to Renee.

"All right, so here you are. Looks like the others are eager to meet you. Come to me or Aela if you're looking for work. Once you've made a bit of a name for yourself, Skjor and Vilkas might have things for you to do. Good luck. Welcome to the Companions."

"Thanks, Farkas." Renee spoke.

But before she could take another two steps in any direction, Farkas stopped her.

"By the way, if you're looking for something to do, we've got a request for someone to speak with the priestess of Kynareth in the temple. Apparently, it's about the tree in the square."

Renee realized what Farkas meant. He was talking about the Gildergreen.

"Aye." Renee simply said, not wanting to babble about how she thought of doing the same thing.

As short while, Renee left Jorrvaskr and headed down to the Gildergreen. Sitting at a bench was a woman dressed in a priestess' robes. As the Priest of Talos was busy shouting his sermons, Renee figured that the priestess was the Priestess of Kynareth. Clearing her throat, she gained the priestess' attention.

"Excuse me. I'm a member of the Companions and I heard something happened at the temple."

The priestess nodded as she stood up.

"The Gildergreen, yes. It's a bit of an eyesore at the moment. More of a problem for the pilgrims than for me, but not many of them around anymore."

"I've heard about this tree when I was a child. I believe it is a cutting off an even greater tree?"

"Aye. To the east of here lies a hidden grove where the Eldergleam resides. It's the oldest living thing in Skyrim. Maybe even all of Tamriel. Our tree here in the city is indeed a cutting from that same tree. You can still feel the glory of the mother tree through it, even in this state."

"Is there a way to revive the tree?" Renee asked.

The Priestess answered her.

"I've thought about that. Trees like this never really die. They only slumber. I think that if we had some of the sap of the parent tree, we could wake up its child."

She then spoke with an ever greyer tone.

"But here's the reason why I asked for a member of the Companions to help me with restoring the tree. Even if you get to the Eldergleam, you couldn't tap it. Not with any normal metal."

"Then what will work?" Renee asked.

"The Eldergleam is older than metal, from a time before men or elves. To even affect it, you have to tap into the old magic. You'll have to deal with the Hagravens. I've heard about a weapon they've made for sacrificing Spriggans."

"What is this weapon?"

"It's called 'Nettlebane.' The hags terrify me, or I would have gone after it myself."

Now knowing what was needed to restore the Gildergreen, Renee spoke up.

"I'll get Nettlebane for you."

Relief washed over the priestess' face as she thanked Renee.

"Your spirit is strong. From what I heard, Nettlebane is held in a Hagraven nest called Orphan Rock. Kynareth's winds will guide your path."

After that, the priestess left Renee's presence and returned to the temple. Now that she knew what to do, Renee decided that before she could go and find out about where Orphan Rock was, she was going to have to go to the local blacksmith and pick up a new set of armor. After receiving a loan from Rahm-Ku after visiting him at a fruit and vegetable stall, Renee was able to purchase a set of steel armor similar to Lydia's save for the fact it had steel shoulder caps. She also bought steel cuffed boots and Nordic gauntlets for her hands and feet.

After looking at a map provided by the blacksmith woman, Renee was on her way to Orphan Rock.

* * *

><p>Meanwhile, with J'Kiirâ€|

As Renee left for Orphan Rock, J'Kiir was finally able to take a break from cleaning Breezehome with Lydia and was now entering an inn at the end of the path. Looking at the sign, he learned that the place was called the 'Bannered Mare' and entered its doors. Inside, he found that he wasn't the only patron of the inn, as several unfamiliar faces conversed with each other and either drinking or eating.

As he sat down at a nearby vacant table, J'Kiir was approached by a Redguard woman, who obviously worked at the inn.

"Can I get you anything, sir?"

"A tankard of your best mead and the day's special." J'Kiir answered, pulling out a large handful of septims from his pouch.

The Redguard obeyed and left to prepare the meal after she handed him his mead. She called it 'Honningbrew Mead' as she handed the ale to the Khajiit.

"I have heard that the taste rivals that of the Black-Briar mead in Riften, but I have yet to taste it."

After thanking the woman, J'Kiir began to sip at his mead while waiting for the special: Venison Stew. The Thief tasted a strong dose of honey in the sweet mead, creating an exquisite taste. But as he drank, he couldn't help but overhear two women gossiping near his table.

"I say this war is idiotic. Look what it's doing to the children of Skyrim."

"Why? What have you heard?"

"Well, there's a boy in Windhelm that is now performing the Black Sacrament."

"He's trying to contact the Dark Brotherhood? Why?"

"Who knows. But I bet it isn't as bad as what is happening to Jarl Balgruuf's youngest son."

"Oh! I've heard that rumor, about him saying the most awful things about his own father."

"Exactly! And I blame the war for their behavior."

J'Kiir stopped listening as his meal arrived and as he ate, he went into deep thought. These rumors about these two boys were disturbing. But were they even true? After he finished his meal and paid the innkeeper, J'Kiir followed his curiosity back to Dragonsreach. As he entered the fortress, he swore he could hear Farengar continue to ask Hiccup and the Viking was struggling to keep up with his answers.

J'Kiir sighed in remorse as he approached the Jarl a third time that

day. Seeing his new Thane, Jarl Balgruuf spoke. "Thane J'Kiir. What brings you back to Dragonsreach?" After bowing to show his respect, the Thief answered.

"Jarl Balgruuf. It has come to my attention the rumors concerning your youngest son. I was wondering if there is anything I could help with."

The Jarl was surprised. He ushered the Khajiit up the stairs to the doors of the Great Porch before speaking again.

"How have you heard of this?"

"Does it really matter now? It is obvious that what I heard was true. Otherwise, why would you rush me here to speak privately? I had only wanted to confirm that it was nothing more than a rumor."

Balgruuf realized that J'Kiir was right. He, the Jarl, acted first instead of asking. Perhaps it was a sign that he needed any help he could take. And with J'Kiir offering to help, he had to take it.

"Yes, my youngest, Nelkir. He is a dark child. I just don't know what to do with him. If you could speak with him, draw out the truth, I would be immensely grateful."

Thanking the Jarl for giving him permission to talk to one of his children, J'Kiir looked around Dragonsreach until he came across a lone boy sitting at a corner of the upper floors, reading a book. Taking notice of J'Kiir, the boy spoke.

"Another wanderer, here to lick my father's booths. Good job."

Ignoring the snide remark, J'Kiir spoke to the boy.

"If I may, my name is J'Kiir. And I take it you must be Nelkir. Your father said to speak to you."

Narrowing his eyes, Nelkir spoke sharply.

"So the disgusting pig sent you to bother me? One day, I'll tear his face apart so he can leave me alone. But I know about him. And about the war. More than he might think."

Raising an eyebrow, J'Kiir asked Nelkir a question.

"How exactly do you know these things?"

Now his turn to raise an eyebrow, Nelkir answered him.

"This castle is old. Lots of places nobody's been in a long while. Places where you can overhear things. See things. And the Whispering Lady."

"Whispering Lady?" J'Kiir asked.

"She won't tell me her name. But I can't open the door."

"What door?"

"In the basement. Trust me. You'll see it. I bet she'll talk to you too."

Suspicious about this 'Whispering Lady,' J'Kiir left Nelkir and headed to the basement, which was just below the kitchens. Avoiding the cooks' gazes, J'Kiir found himself in the basement. After opening one door, J'Kiir came across a single door with a padlock on it. The door was covered in rust and soot as if it had survived a fire. Taking a deep breath, the Khajiit approached the door and placed an ear next to it. Suddenly, a soothing, yet snake-like voice reached J'Kiir's ears.

"At last. The child is spirited, but lacks agency."

Suspicious, J'Kiir spoke to the door.

"What could he not do?"

The door answered him.

"The boy is good at sussing out secrets, but the corruptibility of children is ultimately too limited for my purposes. You, though, I expect will prove far more malleable."

"And who are you really to expect anything?" J'Kiir spoke, carefully using his words to bait the voice to reveal itself.

What she said next surprised him.

"I am **Mephala**, the Lady of Whispers."

If his fur could, J'Kiir would have turned completely white. Mephala was one of the Daedric Princes of Oblivion and is known as the prince of lies, secrets, and conspiracies. Even though she is known for such shady things, she was considered one of the Good Daedra of the Dunmer. A fact he learned while he was in Morrowind for a time.

Even a thief like J'Kiir knew he had to keep a careful eye out for any signs of the Princes. Now, his soft spot for children has him now compelled to continue to listen to Mephala and possibly obey.

"What exactly do you want me to do?"

"First, you must open this door." Mephala answered.

But just as J'Kiir was about to take out a lockpick to work the lock, the prince spoke again.

"It is no use to use such ways, young thief. This lock was made so that only the key would work on it."

"Then how do I open this door?" J'Kiir asked, now curious as to what exactly what was on the other side of the door.

"The whole of Whiterun is ripe with paranoia and tension. The Jarl's court is right to fear the power I hold behind this door. The Jarl trusts a few, and they will be his undoing. The dark child knows of what I speak. Let him guide your path."

With that, Mephala's voice fell silent, leaving J'Kiir no choice but to go back to Nelkir. Making his way back to the boy, J'Kiir was only a few feet away from the boy when Nelkir looked up and spoke, not with disdain this time.

"Youâ€| you know the Whispering Lady, don't you. I can tell."

"Aye, lad. And I know her name too."

This intrigued the boy.

"Really? What is it."

Kneeling down on the floor, J'Kiir answered the boy.

"She is known as Mephala. She's one of the Daedric Princes of Oblivion."

Nelkir's eyes widened at this knowledge as J'Kiir spoke again.

"I take it you have heard of the Daedric Princes?"

Nelkir nodded and held up the book he was reading, the title being 'The Book of the Daedra.'

"Soâ€|was everything she said to me a lie?" Nelkir asked.

J'Kiir shook his head, not in disagreement, but in uncertainty.

"I do not know, lad. I know you don't exactly hold your father to a good light right now, but the only way to get real answers is to ask him. You can't just solely believe in the words of one person. I will not lie that there is a war going on right now, but that is a matter you shouldn't be concerning yourself with. You are young and the last thing you need to worry about is the possibility of a Stormcloak invasion."

After a moment of silence, Nelkir spoke again.

"Mephalaâ€| Does she have you doing her bidding now?"

J'Kiir sighed and nodded.

"Yes. While I spent most of my life trying to avoid Daedra, sometimes things like this can't be helped. Mephala has told me to open the Whispering Door and that you would know how to open it."

Even though he was still shocked at the thought of being in contact with one of the princes, Nelkir now felt obligated to the Khajiit in front of him, who was now halfway bounded to a prince because of the boy's own bitterness and naivetÃ©. Sighing, he gave Nelkir his answer.

"I thought that the door was special for some reason. Only two people can open it: Bal-my father, and Farengar, the court wizard."

Sighing at this information, J'Kiir spoke to Nelkir once again.

"Thank you, Nelkir. For trusting me. But I must ask that we make this

our little secret and that you'll promise me to keep an open mind and talk to your father about what you have been hearing. Alright?"

Nelkir nodded, making his promise.

After leaving Nelkir once more, J'Kiir headed over to where Farengar was: the Great Porch. Upon opening the doors, he found Hiccup in complete exhaustion, especially since the sun had set. Clearing his throat, J'Kiir was able to stop Farengar's constant questioning and catch the attention of both the court wizard and the Viking.

"I don't mean to interrupt, but I think it's best that our northern friend here gets a good night sleep. It's time for him to come home."

As the meeting dispersed, Hiccup mouthed 'thank you' as he took off on Toothless. As the Viking flew, Farengar spoke.

"Everything that boy has told me is absolutely fascinating. I'm surprised that I haven't heard of the things he told me sooner."

"Well, from what I've heard, Hiccup's homeland is a secluded place. Such things about knowledge and culture are like treasure to them."

As Farengar walked passed, J'Kiir followed, his hands at his back, holding the key he pickpocketed when the court wizard passed him.

After parting from Farengar, J'Kiir hurried back to the Whispering Door and, after looking around to see if anyone was watching him, unlocked the door. Upon opening the door, he found that inside the room was not a shrine, but a single table with two items on it: a book and a sword. The sword was a long, katana-like blade that, despite its rusted appearance, held a terrifying power.

Knowing the blade was meant for him to take, J'Kiir gulped and picked up the sword. Upon his touch, the voice of Mephala rang again.

"Excellent work. Now, I trust you're sharp enough to see that the sword doesn't match the description of the Ebony Blade you may know. It has languished too long outside the winds of alliance and betrayal. To return to its past glory, it must first drink the blood of deceit. Your world is admirably seeped in lies and inclinations. My blade is a darling leech that feeds on deceptions, and nourishes its master. Seek out five closest to you. The final pluck of their misguided heartstrings will accompany my blade in the song of your grandeur."

Then, Mephala fell silent once more.

J'Kiir knew what the Prince of Conspiracies meant. In order for the Ebony Blade to be fully restored, he must kill five people who will or have betrayed him with it. Only when it had tasted the blood of five betrayers that it will be the powerful Daedric artifact he had heard about in legend. He had only hoped that his companions won't recognize the blade.

As J'Kiir left Dragonsreach, he was pleased to see the Jarl and Nelkir having a much needed father-son talk. And from the looks of it, everything is going to be alright for the family. Question is, will it be for a Khajiit Thief who is now a champion of a Daedric Prince?

* * *

><p>Next time: _As Renee continues her journey for Nettlebane, Rahm-Ku and Hiccup have their turn for adventure next. First, the Argonian mage-in-training comes across a group of Redguard men who are looking for a woman. Curious, he finds her and learns that there is more to learn about Saadia and the Alik'r than meets the eye._

Then, Hiccup heads to the Falkreath hold to perform a delivery job, he comes across a talking dog that happens to belong to a certain Daedric Prince. With J'Kiir's help in both combat and Daedric influences, can Hiccup force Clavicus Vile to take back Barbas?

8. Alik'r and Talking Dogs

****Chapter 8****

****Alik'r and Talking Dogs****

Hi, I'm back. Looks like I'm gonna do Dawnguard and Dragonborn. I saw the Legendary version of Skyrim in the store and I hope to get it one day.

I do not own How to Train Your Dragon nor The Elder Scrolls.

* * *

><p>With Renee_

It was the morning after being named Thane and Renee was waking up in her usual way: on a patch of grass out in the wilderness. While J'Kiir was gaining the favor of Mephala, Renee took the majority of the day to return to the one place she never thought of returning to: Helgen.

Since it took over a day to reach Whiterun from Helgen, as it was one in the afternoon when Renee placed her head on the intended chopping block, Renee made her way back to Riverwood. Not wanted to spend what little septims she had on a horse, especially with Hagravens about, Renee walked the path back to Riverwood and kept going onward, following signposts until she was near the gates of Helgen once more. By that time, dusk had claimed the rest of the day and Renee spent the remaining daylight hunting for her meal, which were venison and wild plantsâ€|again.

As she made her venison roast, Renee looked to Helgen. No doubt that, after the dragon attack the day before, the local bandits would make Helgen's carcass their new home. Not wanting to deal with bandits before Orphan Rock, Renee kept her distance from the town gates, making sure her fire wouldn't attract unwanted attention, bipedal or

otherwise.

When morning came, a cold mist covered the sky and the forest around her. The wet dew made Renee curse for not bringing a tent.

"Damn. I had forgotten how misty some Skyrim mornings can be. Better find that Hagraven and get back to Whiterun on the double."

Clearing her campsite, Renee kept an ear out for any signs of life. The most common she heard were deer and small game. Occasionally, she could hear a pack of wolves attacking a deer for their breakfast. Deciding to continue onward, Renee took out the remaining piece of cooked venison and started biting into it as she followed the trail, leading her away from Helgen.

It wasn't until she was a quarter of a mile from Helgen that she could see who was there. A pair of women dressed in black.

"The mistress is working on another dead Spriggan. I wonder what she's going to do with it."

"Who cares as long as it doesn't involve our blood. You remember what she did to Aunda? Blew her up with her Firebolt spell and used her blood for enchanting that Forsworn's bow. Just for asking questions about that dagger she made from Spriggans."

"I better chant for good luck on our part tonight." "Just remember to do it quietly. Don't want to become a Forsworn weapon, do you?"

Even without the conversation, Renee knew exactly what these women were: witches. Renee had encountered witches before and knew that some witches were apprentices of Hagravens. And this 'dagger' they were talking about must've been Nettlebane. Once again, Renee thanked the gods that she remembered a shield and left the brush. Upon seeing the Nord, the witches became hostile and after a third witch had joined them, the triad began to cast various Destruction spells at her. This wasn't the first time Renee had to deal with witches. In fact, she knew a couple of spells herself for when the need arise. But those, as far as she's concerned, were her last resort weapons.

With her shield defending her, Renee rushed at the witches, careful so as not to have her back exposed to them. The only other weapons witches carried were daggers, so it was quick work for Renee to kill the three witches. The first she rushed at she impaled in the gullet. The second witch, who wielded ice magic, Renee crushed with her shield against a wooden pike at the base of Orphan Rock. The third witch was tricky, as she casted lightning magic. The Nord had plenty of experience to know that metal and electricity don't mix well and quickly cut off the head of the last witch.

After looting the bodies for gold and things she could sell for more septims, Renee followed the path up the hill and from across a fallen log, she saw it. Hagravens were considerably ugly creatures. Legends say that Hagravens were women who sold themselves to dark magic. Hagravens, even with different facial features, had similar appearances. All Hagravens looked like old women, thin and frail, with talons and feathers all over her body, erasing any idea that these creatures were human once.

Seeing the Warrior, the Hagraven shrieked and started casting a powerful Destruction spell. To avoid the spell, Renee hid behind the stump of the fallen log and caught her breath. There was no choice but to rush in and kill the hag quickly. Climbing onto the slippery log, Renee dashed across, her shield taking on heavy damage as the Hagraven continued to cast her spell. Then, with one fell swoop, Renee's blade sliced through the Hagraven's gullet, slicing her in half.

With the Hagraven dead, Renee began to loot the body. Nestled in a makeshift sheath made of deer leather was a knife. The blade of the knife was curvy and the metal was black, probably made of ebony ingots as well as Spriggans. As Renee held the knife, nausea struck the pit of her stomach. This had to be Nettlebane. The Nord could sense why the great tree would coil away from it.

As she plucked the Hagraven's feathers and removed her talons for J'Kiir, Renee wondered if this was the right thing. Was this what Kynareth wanted? Placing the knife in her satchel, Renee looted the rest of the witches' camp before returning to Whiterun.

* * *

><p>With Rahm-Kuâ€|

Meanwhile in Whiterun, Rahm-Ku was finishing up with a delivery for to the blacksmith when he was approached by a man with reddish-brown skin. A Redguard. And judging from his red and brown ragged clothing, he was defiantly not a native Skyrim Redguard. If the Argonian could guess, the man might be from as far as Hammerfell.

"You there. We're looking for someone in Whiterun, and will pay good money for information."

Rahm-Ku found this suspicious, especially with the man's tone. Keeping a tight grip, on his delivery, he spoke.

"Who are you looking for?"

The man answered him while gesturing to the Redguard behind him.

"A woman. A foreigner in these lands. Redguard, like us. Has a scar over her left eyebrow. She is likely not using her true name. We will pay for any information regarding her location."

Rahm-Ku shook his head.

"Sorry. I haven't met any Redguards other than you two as of yet. But if I do find this woman, where can I find you?"

The man answered the Argonian, keeping a lookout for something.

"We are not welcome here in Whiterun, so we'll be in Rorikstead if you learn anything. Find a Redguard that has the same uniform as us and responds to our name 'Alik'r."

"I'll keep that in mind." Rahm-Ku answered.

As the Redguards left him and out Whiterun's gates, Rahm-Ku began to wonder what this was all about. Handing his delivery to the

blacksmith, Adrianne, Rahm-Ku decided to ask the smithy a question.

"Do you know of any Redguard women in Whiterun? I've had a run-in with some Redguards who were looking for someone with a scar over her left eyebrow."

"The only one that fits that description is Saadia at the Bannered Mare. She's the only Redguard that lives here that has a scar like that." Adrianne answered as she worked on some steel.

Thanking Adrianne and receiving his pay, Rahm-Ku headed to the Bannered Mare. Had he been there the day before, he could've met up with J'Kiir when he learned about Nelkir and the boy in Windhelm. As he entered the Bannered Mare, the Argonian Mage managed to spot the mysterious Saadia entering the inn's kitchen.

Making sure not to draw attention to himself, Rahm-Ku made his way to the kitchen and approached the woman. Looking up, the Redguard was startled at Rahm-Ku's sudden appearance at first, but calmed down as she stirred a pot of the day's soup while she spoke.

"Can I help you, sir?"

Not wanting to beat around the bush, Rahm-Ku told the woman what he had heard.

"Did you know that some Alik'r warriors are looking for a Redguard woman with a scar over her left brow?"

The woman's reddish skin suddenly became a pale color as she spoke in fear.

"Oh no! They've found me? I need your help!"

The sudden demand surprised Rahm-Ku as the woman ushered him up the stairs of the inn, where the innkeeper and the staff would sleep.

"Please, come with me. I need to speak to you privately."

Rahm-Ku couldn't get a word in edgewise as he stumbled and tripped on his way up the stairs. He prayed that no one was watching this and getting the wrong idea.

But as he regained his footing, Saadia passed him and unlocked the door to her room. As soon as the two of them entered the room, Saadia turned around and pointed a knife at the mage's throat, a fierce look on her face.

"So, are you working with them? You think you can take me? You so much as touch me, and you're going to lose fingers. I mean it! I'll cut you in half!"

Shaking his hands in defense, Rahm-Ku voiced his answer.

"Relax, ma'am! I'm not going to hurt you!"

Though wary of the Argonian, Saadia lowered her weapon, but kept it out.

"Then I need your help and there isn't anyone I can trust in the city."

"What? What is all this about?" Rahm-Ku demanded as Saadia placed her dagger down on her table.

"I am not the person the people of Whiterun think I am. My real name is Iman. I am a noble of House Suda in Hammerfell. The men who are looking for me, the Alik'r, they are assassins in the employ of the Aldmeri Dominion. They wish to exchange my blood for gold. I need you to root them out and drive them away before they find me and drag me back to Hammerfell for execution."

Rahm-Ku folded his arms, suspicious of the woman before him.

"And how am I supposed to get rid of them?"

Saadia answered him.

"They're mercenaries, only in it for the money. They're lead by a man named Kematu. Get rid of him, and the rest will scatter. I don't dare show my face, lest they recognize me, so you'll have to find out where they are."

Again, Rahm-Ku wasn't convinced with her story. If she needed his help, she shouldn't have pulled a dagger on him without figuring out what side he's on. But for now, he had to play along.

"Any suggestions as to how I find them?" He asked.

Saadia answered him.

"I heard one of them was just arrested trying to sneak into the city. If he's locked up in the jail, perhaps you can get it out of him."

Seeing that the mage was suspicious of her, the woman spoke again.

"Please, I know I'm asking you to do something difficult, maybe even dangerous. I just don't know who else I can trust."

"Then why haven't you gone to the guards about this?"

"These men are ruthless. Cunning, deceitfulâ€¦they'll pay off whoever they can. I can't trust anyone here in Whiterun. Guards and jarls can be bought. And the Alik'r are close; I'm running out of time, so I'm choosing to trust you."

"But why are the Alik'r after you?" Rahm-Ku asked.

"I don't know for sure. I spoke out against the Aldmeri Dominion publicly; I suspect that's why these men were hired to hunt me down."

Sighing, Rahm-Ku spoke.

"Very well. I will see to this."

Saadia sighed as she sat down in her chair.

"Find me the moment the Alik'r are taken care of."

After leaving the Bannered Mare, Rahm-Ku returned to Dragonsreach. But instead of the Grand Hall, Rahm-Ku headed to the right, toward the dungeons. There were many benefits of being Thane as Rahm-Ku found out, for the guards hadn't given him trouble as of yet. By far, Rahm-Ku found only one prisoner in the dungeons, a Redguard. As Rahm-Ku approached the cell, the Redguard took notice of him.

"What are you looking at, lizard?"

Ignoring the 'lizard' comment, Rahm-Ku spoke to the prisoner.

"I need to find Kematu. Where is he hiding?"

The prisoner looked at him in surprise.

"You have a death wish, then? If you know that name, you must know to meet him would meet your end."

But then the prisoner decided to use this to his advantage.

"But it seems we have needs, friend. Perhaps we can help each other out."

Rahm-Ku expected this. Nothing in this world is truly given for free.

"What is it that you need?"

The Redguard answered him.

"I have dishonored my brothers by being captured, and so they have left me here. My life with the Alik'r is over now, but I have no wish to dies in this gods-forsaken land. If I can be released from prison, I may start over. See to that, and I'll tell you what you need to know."

"In other words, you want me to pay your fine if I want to get anywhere with finding Kematu in Skyrim." Rahm-Ku announced.

The Redguard nodded.

"Now we see eye to eye. My fine is a hundred septims. Pay it to the guard, and I can tell you where Kematu is hiding."

Nodding, Rahm-Ku turned to the guard and pulled out his money pouch.

"I wish to pay for that man's fine."

He then pulled out the septims and handed them to the guard, who took them.

"As you wish, Thane Rahm-Ku. Try to convince him to stay out of the city while you're at it."

As the guard left, Rahm-Ku turned his attention back to the

Redguard.

"I paid your fine. Now tell me about Kematu."

The Redguard nodded.

"Very well. Kematu is west of Whiterun. It's an unassuming little cave called 'Swindler's Den.' You do realize if you set foot in there, you're never coming back out. They'll kill you."

As Rahm-Ku turned around, he spoke one last time to the prisoner.

"I'm not going in there for a fight. I'm going to get some answers."

After leaving the dungeons, Rahm-Ku decided to purchase a few things while he was in Dragonsreach. Speaking to Proventus Avenicci, Rahm-Ku purchased bedroom furnishings, kitchen furnishings, and an alchemy room. With those being delivered, Rahm-Ku headed to the market and purchased three more maps of Skyrim before setting out for the Swindler's Den.

* * *

><p>With Hiccup and J'Kiir€|

With Renee returning from Orphan Rock and Rahm-Ku on his way to the Swindler's Den, Hiccup and J'Kiir remained the only ones who were staying in Whiterun. After receiving the word that Rahm-Ku was going off on a little errand and wouldn't be back for hours, J'Kiir took this as an opportunity for a break from work and decided to see to Hiccup, who was waking up at midday from talking to Farengar. So far, no one had questioned the Khajiit on where he got the Ebony Blade, which suited him just fine. The last thing he wanted was another lecture from the Argonian Mage on dealing with Daedra.

It was only a few minutes after Hiccup woke up that J'Kiir returned with a package in his hands.

"What's that, J'Kiir?" The Viking asked.

"A delivery. And one that will pay well if the job gets done well. But I may need your help."

"With what?" Hiccup asked, raising an eyebrow.

"I want to make the trip short, so I was hoping to borrow you and Toothless for a while."

Knowing that they needed the money, Hiccup groaned.

"Where to?"

With a grin, J'Kiir placed one of the maps he received from Rahm-Ku before he left on the table, which was delivered a few minutes ago. He pointed to a land southwest of Whiterun. Land that looked very familiar.

"We're going back to the Falkreath province. We need to deliver to a

blacksmith at the capitol."

Though drowsy at the same time, Hiccup was confused at J'Kiir's statement.

"Going back? What are you talking about?"

Realizing that Hiccup knew even less about Skyrim than he did, J'Kiir pointed to a spot on the map.

"Falkreath was where Helgen was. But we're avoiding it for a while until things calm down."

He then pointed to a symbol farther along from Helgen: A shield with a deer head on it.

"Falkreath, the capitol, is right here. It's in the middle of a dense forest, but it should be fine. And the trees would give Toothless plenty of cover until either the people of Falkreath accepts us all or when we leave."

Hiccup didn't like the idea of having Toothless as a black, scaly carrier pigeon. But with both Renee and Rahm-Ku gone, most likely that it would be up to the Viking and the Khajiit to make some money to finish up Breezehome and purchase supplies for the trip up High Hrothgar. And since this was an opportunity to explore more of Skyrim and avoid anymore of Farengar's questions, Hiccup decided to accept.

It only took a few minutes to let Lydia know that they would be gone for the day for a delivery and exploration and told her to keep watch on Breezehome and the latest news and gossip at the same people of Whiterun were still skittish of Toothless, but it was better than full-blown panic. After passing through the gates of Whiterun, the duo were able to take off and head towards the southwest.

With Toothless' incredible speed, it only took them minutes to reach their destination near Falkreath. Unfortunately, the landing wasn't as graceful as either Dragonborn intended, what with the thick trees and rocky terrain. Thankfully, when they crashed on the cobblestone road that lead to the capitol, no one was there to witness two teenagers and a dragon crashing in a comical way when there was a terrible threat of dragons looming over their heads.

After checking to make sure that the gear on Toothless didn't break like the last time, the duo bid their scaly friend a temporary farewell and walked the half-mile to Falkreath.

Falkreath was a hold that Hiccup didn't expect. Despite being a capitol, Falkreath was the size of a simple village, maybe an fourth of Berk in size. The trees surrounding the town were not only good in protecting the village, but it provided a livelihood for lumber mills, which no doubt provided a major business operation in the hold. But unlike Whiterun and Riverwood, there was a cemetery at the outskirts of the village. Hiccup wondered this as a guard, dressed in a dark uniform, approached the pair.

"You two. Did either of you see a dog out here?"

Both the Viking and the Khajiit were confused.

"I didn't see any dogs." Hiccup spoke.

J'Kiir shook his head.

"All we saw were wolves. But no dogs."

The guard sighed as he answered the duo's internal questions.

"Ah, well. The blacksmith is offering a reward for a dog he saw on the road. I was hoping you'd seen it. I guess I'll stay on the lookout. Keep your noses clean while you're here, outsiders."

Nodding in agreement, the pair walked into the village, this time not facing opposition for J'Kiir's race. Curious about the dog, and that the delivery was for the blacksmith, the pair headed to the smithy. After delivering the package, the blacksmith ask them the question the guard asked them.

"Did you see a hound on the road? A fine, strong creature that's been wondering near town."

Again, the pair shook their heads.

"No. Sorry. We didn't see any dog."

The blacksmith continued.

"There's one out on the road. I can't afford to chase him down but I could use a fierce, loyal beast to keep me company. If you were willing to retrieve him for me, I'd give you some fresh meat to attract him out on the road."

Shrugging their shoulders, the duo spoke to the blacksmith.

"We'll keep an eye out for it."

Thanking the pair, the blacksmith continued his work while Hiccup and J'Kiir walked away and whispered to each other.

"What do you think?" Hiccup asked.

J'Kiir shrugged his shoulders.

"I am not sure. On one hand, it would be a great opportunity to earn some money. On the other hand, why go all this trouble for a dog?"

Curious, the duo headed out the north gate.

As they followed the path, J'Kiir spotted something up the road.

"I think I see something."

Jogging forward a few feet, Hiccup could see the form of a large, hairy wolfhound walking up towards them.

"He's heading this way." The Viking announced.

But just as they were about to devise a plan to apprehend the hound, the dog did something the pair never expected.

"You two are exactly what I was looking for."

The sudden sound of a voice startled the two foreigners as they pinpointed the sound coming from the dog.

"Did you just talk?"

The duo asked at the same time. The hound didn't express any emotion, but his voice made them think he was being a smart alek.

"Skyrim is now host to giant, flying lizards and two-legged cat-men and you're surprised by me? Yes. I just talked. And I am continuing to do so."

The dog then planted himself in front of the pair and continued to speak.

"You see, my name is Barbus. And I have a problem I think you two can help sort out."

"What kind of problem?" Hiccup asked, still trying to figure out what kind of problem could a talking dog have.

Barbus answered.

"My master and I had a bit of a falling out. We got into an argument and it got rather heated. He's kicked me out until I find someone who can settle our disagreement. That's where you two come in."

Looking at each other, the teens shrugged their shoulders and spoke.

"Sounds reasonable enough." Hiccup spoke. J'Kiir nodded.

"I agree."

Barbus then wagged his tail.

"Thank you. Now, since he's banished me, Vile's been rather weak. He can't manifest far from one of his shrines. I know a cult that worships him at Haemar's Shame. We should be able to talk to him there."

At the sound of Barbus' master's name, J'Kiir's fur went stiff.

"Did you say 'Vile?' As in Clavicus Vile?"

Barbus nodded.

"Yep. That's him."

J'Kiir went on to mutter some Khajiit curses as a confused Hiccup looked to Barbus and asked him his question.

"Who's Clavicus Vile? Sounds like J'Kiir knows him."

"Of course he should. Vile _is_ the Daedric Prince of Power, Trickery, Wishes, and Bargains." Barbus announced.

"And one of the Daedra you do _not_ want to meet." J'Kiir added in.

Scratching his head, Hiccup looked at the map to find Haemar's Shame east of Helgen and spoke up.

"Look. While we're already doing this, can someone _please_ tell me what a Daedric Prince is and why it's a bad idea to meet this 'Clavicus Vile' guy?"

Looking to Barbus, J'Kiir answered the dog's mental inquiry.

"He's new to Tamriel. He worships different gods."

"Ah." Barbus answered as J'Kiir turned his attention to Hiccup as they walked back to Toothless, going around Falkreath to avoid suspicion.

"To begin with, Hiccup, it's best if I tell you Tamriel's beginning-of-the-world story. We worship the Nine, or Eight as it is now, Divines. They represent the good gods of our land and keep domain over different houses. They are, as follows; Akatosh, the chief of the gods and the god of time, who takes the form of a dragon; Arkay, the god of life and death; Dibella, the goddess of beauty, Julianos, the god of wisdom and logic; Kynareth, the goddess of Nature; Mara, the goddess of love and the mother of the other gods; Stendarr, the god of mercy and justice; Zenithar, the god of work and commerce; and of course Talos, the god of war and governance.

"These gods were responsible for creating the world, with Talos coming later in the Third era. But, there are also immortal beings who did not partake in creating us and the world. The elves were the ones that called them 'Daedra', which means 'Not our Ancestor.' Daedra are considered demons, with seventeen of the strongest Daedra ruling over them. These are the Daedric Princes, and the reason we have come to fear them is because they have no solid sense of morality, making amusement at the thought of mortals being playthings. And one such example is Clavicus Vile.

"Clavicus Vile is, as the dog put it, the Prince of Bargains and Trickery. He is capable of granting wishes for those who seek him out. But those who do wish would often regret summoning him, as he is known to take back his deals at inopportune times for the summoner. Which is why no matter what you do or what you need, NEVER let Vile trick you into a fool's deal. Do so, and you'll become another victim of Vile's bargains."

Taking note, Hiccup decided to purchase a book about the Daedric Princes after this is over. Question is—What kind of negotiations can he and J'Kiir have with Clavicus Vile in order to make him take back his dog.

* * *

><p>Next Time:**

_Renee concludes her quest and restores the Gildergreen, Rahm-Ku

learns the truth about Saadia, and Hiccup and J'Kiir encounter Clavicus Vile: Daedric Prince of Power._

9. Justice, Worship, and Princes

****Chapter 9****

****Justice, Worship, and Princes****

Hi again. Here's another chapter. Before I type, I just want to point out that I DO know that J'Kiir isn't speaking in third-person like any other Khajiit. It's a part of the plot. Also, I'm back in college, so I will be typing less than I want to. But I will keep writing my fics.

I do not own How to Train Your Dragon or The Elder Scrolls. Only Renee, Rahm-Ku, J'Kiir, and Nibarr.

* * *

><p>Renee_

After obtaining Nettlebane from the Hagraven at Orphan Rock, Renee spent the next couple of hours walking back to Whiterun, carefully concealing the dagger from prying eyes. The last thing she wanted was to have trouble with a dark magical artifact.

"Ok. So all that's left is to deliver Nettlebane, and then I can go back to Jorrvaskr and let them know the job's done."

After passing Whiterun's gates, Renee headed up the first set of stairs to the Wind District and after passing a couple of houses, entered the Temple of Kynareth. There, the priestess, whom Renee had heard the people in the temple call her 'Danica,' was making use of the School of Restoration on some of the sick and injured. Even if she wasn't a practiced sorceress, Renee had to admit that the most useful of the Schools of Magic was Restoration. Even the most battle-ready Orc had to admit that it is useful to know at least one spell of Restoration in case they find themselves out of potions in the midst of battle.

Calmly, Renee approached Danica and cleared her throat, causing the priestess to take notice upon her return. Taking the Warrior aside to the center of the temple, where a mosaic circle of a dove shined in the sunlight, Danica spoke.

"So, have you gotten Nettlebane from those filthy Hagravens?"

Renee nodded and pulled out Nettlebane, careful not to cause a panic.

"Aye. Here it is."

As Renee tried to give her Nettlebane, the priestess backed away in anxiety.

"Sorry. I don't really want to touch that thing. But do you think you can handle the next step?"

Renee knew this was too good to be true. Let the mercenaries dirty their hands and leave the employer pure. Knowing that letting out her temper would only be bad for her spot in the Companions, Renee nodded reluctantly.

"You want me to collect some of Eldergleam's sap, don't you?"

Danica nodded.

"Aye. The Eldergleam Sanctuary is just east of here. Just a bit away from Darkwater Crossing, a small mining village at the border of Eastmarch and Riften. Use Nettlebane to retrieve some of the sap."

After Danica marked Darkwater Crossing and the sanctuary on her map, Renee was about to leave when a voice stopped her.

"Excuse me. Was I correct in hearing that you were traveling to the grove of the Eldergleam?"

Renee turned to find that the owner of the voice was a Breton man in simple traveling attire.

"Can I help you?" she asked.

The Breton answered her.

"My name is Maurice Jondrelle. I am a traveler. A pilgrim. I follow the voice of Kynareth wherever it can be heard. I've dreamed of seeing Eldergleam for years. Might I travel alongside you? I promise not to get in the way."

Now although she hadn't been back in Skyrim for very long, Renee knew that the forests and rocky cliffs of Skyrim's wilderness were not only home to wolves, bears, and Sabre Cats, but are also home to trolls, bandits, and the occasional thief. She wanted to go alone but her gut told her to bring him along, that he might be useful. Usually, Renee's gut was never wrong, so she complied.

"Alright. You may come. Just be prepared for what we might face on the road."

Maurice smiled and nodded.

"I thank you for your kindness."

And with that, Renee was on the road again.

* * *

><p>Rahm-Ku_**

While Renee was off to the Eldergleam Sanctuary, Rahm-Ku was off to another location the opposite way. He wanted to confront this Kematu character and demand the truth about Saadia, the Redguard woman in Whiterun. Something about Saadia didn't appear right. Like with Renee, his gut instincts were telling him not to trust the Redguard.

The plains of Whiterun were vast and grassy, the plant life turning

brown for the autumn. The only living things he encountered were wolves, deer and elk, and one Sabre Cat. He passed a couple of giant encampments as he headed east; smart enough to know never to approach a giant or their mammoths. Only the most skilled merchants have the capabilities to deal with these beings, paying or trading for mammoth milk and meat. He had heard from traveling merchants that often came to his mother's shop that giants were generally peaceful, so long as they and their mammoth herds are left alone. He'd pity the poor fool who would dare harass a giant.

It took no more than two hours to get from Whiterun to his destination by foot. It would've taken him sooner hadn't he kept stopping to slay attacking wolves and gathering herbs for medicines and potions. J'Kiir wasn't the only one who could concoct potions in their little group. But as he got close to the underground cave, Rahm-Ku stopped to look back at the southwest. Though a small hill was blocking his view, he still could sense the mountain that he and his companions still had to climb. The questions concerning the 'Dragonborn' and their ability to use the Thu'um were plaguing him none-stop, especially since he was an inquisitive person.

But as he turned to face the den, he noticed something to the north. A dragon circling a mountain before landing at its peak.

"Another one already? What in the name of the Divines is going on?"

He made a mental note to inform the others about the dragon. If they are 'Dragonborn', surely a dragon would be their business. And besides, he couldn't defeat one dragon alone. Last time, he had the aid of the Whiterun guards as he battled his dragon at the watchtower.

Shaking his head, Rahm-Ku muttered to himself.

"No time for that. First, Kematu. Then, the dragon."

He then entered the cave, a fire spell in one hand and a light in the other. Upon entering the cave, Rahm-Ku could hear voices coming from down the tunnel. Crouching, the Argonian Mage quietly walked until he reached the end of the tunnel and the entrance of a larger chamber. In the chamber, two men, whom Rahm-Ku figured to be bandits because of their clothing, were conversing amongst themselves, only a few words Rahm-Ku could hear involved the Alik'r.

Not wanting to cause a commotion, Rahm-Ku crept past the men and made his way down another tunnel.

"_I knew sneaking out of the house at night would do me good one day."_

Rahm-Ku thought to himself as he remembered times when his parents would ground him and he would sneak off when no one, not even his sisters were looking. Only a few times he was proud of this skill, this day would be one of them.

He shortly came upon another large chamber, one with a ridge looking over the rest of the cave. And of course, bandits inside. Seeing these bandits, he wondered if Saadia was indeed being truthful about the Alik'r being assassins. Unfortunately, no matter how many times

he tried to process that thought, Rahm-Ku couldn't shake the feeling that Saadia was still hiding something.

Creeping past an overly exposed chamber with a larger number of bandits than the last chamber proved difficult for Rahm-Ku, especially since there was a bandit looking down from the ridge. Rahm-Ku made a promise to himself to read up on the books Farengar gave him as payment for Hiccup's knowledge about non-Tamrielic dragons.

Then, it suddenly dawned on him. He had one of those books and the one he got from Bleak Falls Barrow in his satchel for a bit of light reading. Perhaps it could grant him a spell that would help him sneak past the bandits easily. After reaching the next tunnel, Rahm-Ku found an alcove where a skeleton was lying on a bale of hay, reaching out for a bottle of ale long before he died. Carefully avoiding sitting on the bones, Rahm-Ku took out the book.

The book was a violet cover with the symbol of Oblivion on the front. A Conjunction book. He only knew only two Conjunction spells from his past: Bound Dagger and Bound Sword. This book, however, told Rahm-Ku on how to summon an actual Daedra from Oblivion called a 'Flame Atronach' and controls it. Rahm-Ku studied the spell hard and when he felt that he memorized the whole spell, he tucked the book into his satchel and continued onward.

Once he was close to the larger chamber, Rahm-Ku quietly casted the spell. He used his magic to conjure from the planes of Oblivion, putting much energy into bringing forth a Daedra. Suddenly, a violet portal appeared in front of him and something came out. It looked like a woman made of fire and possibly black armor. While it looked beautiful, the heat coming from the Daedra reassured Rahm-Ku that this 'woman' was quite deadly.

It was a Flame Antronach.

The Flame Antronach awaited its orders from its summoner. Once he realized that the Daedra was under his control, Rahm-Ku gave his orders as he pointed to the chamber's opening. "Defeat all of the bandits in that chamber!" Understanding the Mage's instructions, the Daedra made its way into the chamber with grace. Rahm-Ku waited quietly as he heard bandits scramble and scream, either in agony or in retaliation. He peeked into the chamber once, only to jump back to avoid a fireball from incinerating him.

Thenâ€¦silence.

As soon as he heard the silence, Rahm-Ku entered the chamber and saw the destruction that the Daedra caused. Several small fires speckled the cave in a lovely glow, the bandits were either singed beyond recognition or turned to ash completely, and the Flame Antronach danced like a serpent until Oblivion claimed it back. Overlooking the destruction, Rahm-Ku released the breath he was holding as he looted the bodies and the chamber of valuables.

"Note to self: Never get between an Antronach and its prey. Also, swallow my pride and learn how to sneak better from the Khajiit."

The next chamber was empty, probably because its residents were

smoldering embers in the larger chamber, so Rahm-Ku walked on until he was over the previous chamber and made his way down one more tunnel. Crouching down, he tried to sneak through the water-filled chamber until he heard a shout.

"Alik'r, hold!"

The voice then called down to Rahm-Ku from the waterfall ahead of him.

"Stay your hand, mage!"

Rahm-Ku held still as he looked to where the voice was coming from: above the waterfall.

"It's no secret why you're here and you have proven your skills in combat. Let's talk a moment, and no one else needs to die. I think we can all profit from the situation in which we find ourselves. My men will not attack you, so lower your magic."

"I only want answers." Rahm-Ku called back. "Why are you after Saadia? Are you truly assassins as she claims?"

The voice, whom Rahm-Ku figured belonged to Kematu, spoke in surprise.

"Assassins? No, nothing so crass. 'Saadia', as you know her, is wanted by the noble houses of Taneth for treason. She sold the city out to the Aldmeri Dominion. Were it not for her betrayal, Taneth could still have held its ground in the war. The other noble houses discovered her betrayal and she fled. They want her brought back alive. The resistance against the Dominion is alive and well in Hammerfell, and they want justice."

Even though he couldn't see Kematu, Rahm-Ku knew he was being honest. He had read up on most recent events that have been happening in Tamriel before he set foot into Skyrim. While he wasn't fully prepared for the civil war in Skyrim, he knew well of the resistance in Hammerfell. Only a traitor would allow the Aldmeri Dominion to order them around like dogs.

'Saadia' had been lying to him the whole time.

"I see now. That's why she nearly slit my throat when I mentioned the Alik'r was looking for a Redguard woman." Rahm-Ku then looked up to the waterfall. "My apologies for taking out your 'hired help.' What do you need me to do to help?"

"Come on out of the waterfall so we can talk face to face." Kematu replied.

Rahm-Ku obeyed, removing his magika from his hands. In front of him a ramp and at the top were nine Redguard men, the one in the middle had no hood, indicating Kematu. As soon as Rahm-Ku was up the ramp, Kematu spoke.

"Alright. She trusts you, at least to some extent, She sent you after us, and has no reason to think that you'd do anything other than that. Convince her that we'll be coming for her, and she needs to leave. Lead her to the stables outside Whiterun. We'll be waiting to

take her into custody. I'll gladly share a portion of the bounty in return for your efforts in seeing proper justice done."

In agreement, Rahm-Ku left the cave and headed back to Whiterun, his pace quickened to avoid unwanted distractions. When he got to Whiterun, it was dark. He then hurried back to the Bannered Mare, knowing that his little 'jog' would help convince Saadia. Once inside the inn, he made his way to Saadia, who was in her room. She looked at him expectantly.

"Any news of the Alik'r?"

Panting, Rahm-Ku spoke his lines.

"There were too many of them. They're on their way here."

"What? How? I thought they weren't allowed within the city!" Saadia spoke in shock with a hint of rage.

Rahm-Ku answered her.

"They've found a way in. We need to get you out of here. Now!"

"But where will I go? I can't keep running forever!" Saadia exclaimed.

Rahm-Ku went on.

"Before I entered the city, I went and hired a horse for you. It can take you as far as Morrowind or Cyrodiil. I'll make sure you're safe."

Saadia spoke angrily.

"After all this, I have to pick up and leave again? If you really think this is the only way, I trust you. Let's not waste any time."

Rahm-Ku nodded and followed Saadia to the stables. But as they got to the bridge, Rahm-Ku tripped. He didn't know if the Divines were with him or his own clumsiness paid off, but he took it to his advantage.

"Just keep running!"

Saadia didn't even look back. She dashed to the stables and turned the corner.

As soon as he got up, Rahm-Ku walked to the stables. When he turned the corner, he found Saadia frozen by some sort of spell. Kematu left the shadows and approached the Mage.

"Well done, mage. Now, we'll take our friend back to Hammerfell, where she will pay the price for her treason."

"She won't be harmed?" Rahm-Ku asked.

Kematu shook his head.

"Not on the way back. Once she gets there, it's not up to me to

decide what's done with her."

He then tossed the Mage a small sack of septims and a curved sword that Redguards were known to carry.

"Here's your portion of the reward. Spend it wisely, and if I mayâ€¦ Don't allow yourself to be fooled by a pretty face. You're better than that, I can tell. And I am leaving you with one of our spare scimitars just in case."

Rahm-Ku nodded as the Alik'r took their prisoner away. Upon his return to Breezehome, he counted five hundred septims in the sack after he placed the scimitar on a crate. Pretty good coin for what he had gone through.

Now, Rahm-Ku will wait for Renee and the others.

* * *

><p>Renee_**

While Rahm-Ku was returning from his little excursion, Renee was at the entrance to the Eldergleam Sanctuary with Maurice. The only wildlife that bothered them were the usual pack of wolves and the occasional Sabre Cat. They had nearly missed the cave until they saw the mining community of Darkwater Crossing. Thankfully, they didn't have to double-back and found the cave off to the east side of the road. It was sheltered amongst a cluster of trees, making the entrance barely noticeable due to the shadows.

Upon entering the Sanctuary, Renee placed a hand on the sheathed Nettlebane. While she was not exactly a religious person, the Warrior had her respects to the Divines and was not looking forward to extracting the sap from Kynareth's tree. Her focus returned to the Sanctuary as she heard Maurice exclaim.

"Beautiful."

Indeed, the Eldergleam Sanctuary was far more beautiful than anything the Nord could come up with. Even in the middle of autumn, the plants in the Sanctuary were vibrant green and vibrant colored flowers blossomed. A waterfall could be heard nearby as the two pilgrims followed the manmade path to a bridge, where a man was sitting at the edge of the waterfall's earth, taking in the exotic beauty. As they followed the path outside the center of the Sanctuary, they found another person, a woman, lying on her back and taking in the same beauty as the travelers and the man at the waterfall. And at the top of a hill in the Sanctuary was a gigantic tree with pink blossoms shining in the setting sunlight, its gnarled roots large and entangled with one another.

It was the Eldergleam.

Renee's heart pumped faster as she made her way to the first set of roots of the great tree. But as she pulled out Nettlebane, Maurice stopped her.

"Here now. What exactly do you think you're doing?"

Renee turned to the Breton and answered.

"The priestess, Danica, has asked me to bring her some of the Eldergleam's sap in order to save the Gildergreen in Whiterun."

This came as a shock to Maurice.

"You would violate this marvel of Kynareth's glory to fix that half-breed stump in Whiterun? That's abominable! Barbaric! I'll have no part in this! Why didn't you tell me what you intended?"

Renee folded her arms as she spoke to Maurice, cross.

"Do you have a better idea?"

Hearing the question, Maurice calmed down and answered her.

"Wellâ€¦yesâ€¦ There is something. It won't repair the tree back at the temple, but we could bring them a new one."

This caught Renee's interest.

"What exactly do you have in mind?"

Maurice passed her as he spoke.

"Follow me. I think I can convince the tree to help us."

This confused Renee as she allowed Maurice to lead the way. As the pilgrim approached the roots, he placed his hands together and prayed to Kynareth. To the Warrior's surprise, the roots responded to her charge and parted, allowing them passage. Curious, Renee walked behind Maurice as he approached the Eldergleam. As soon as he was a couple of feet away from the tree, the pilgrim got down to his knees and prayed again. Moments later, a sapling with its roots kept safe in a small bag appeared.

"The Eldergleam has blessed us with a sapling. You should take it to Whiterun. Danica will want to see that the true blessings of nature lie in renewal, not slavish maintenance."

At least it was better than cutting the holy tree with an unholy weapon according to Renee.

"Thank you. But what will you do now?"

Maurice answered.

"I will stay here and continue to pray. May the Kynareth's winds carry only the sweetest scents."

Leaving the pilgrim to his prayers, Renee picked up the sapling by the roots and started on her trek back to Whiterun. By the time she returned, night had fallen and at the time, Rahm-Ku was lying to Saadia. Upon returning to the temple, Danica spoke to the Warrior.

"Have you collected the sap?"

Renee shook her head.

"No. I've brought a sapling instead."

Danica was surprised as she looked at the sapling.

"But, I can't run the temple without the support of people who are inspired by the Gildergreen. How can this little tree bring worshipers?"

Renee had the answer.

"Maurice, the man I left with, said that renewal is more important than maintenance. And I, too, believe this is what Kynareth wants."

Danica was about to argue, but stopped.

"Iâ€| You're right. It can be hard to hear the words of Kynareth when all you can hear are the rabble in the temple. Death feeds new life."

Danica then took the tree.

"I'm sure that in time, this little sapling will grow into a new Gildergreen that will tower over Whiterun. Thank you, Companion."

With that settled, Renee left the temple and headed to Jorrvaskr, where only Farkas remained in the main hall.

"Well?"

Renee gave the Companion her report in detail while Farkas listened. The woman hoped that the result wouldn't hinder her already weak status in the Companions as she told Farkas. Once she was finish, she held her breath and waited for the results. What she got was totally different from what she expected as Farkas answered her.

"You did well, and this was your first task in the Companions. We are mercenaries, but not mindless brutes. We all have our morals and beliefs. This is once place where the White-Gold Concordant has no power, so Talos worship is allowed. Good job."

The result was a surprise to Renee, who wanted to get in the Companions like her friends in the Sabre Fangs did long before her. It was quite a relief and a confusing result, but one she'd happily accept.

After thanking Farkas and receiving her pay, Renee left Jorrvaskr and returned to Breezehome at what she figured was 8 o'clock at night. When she entered her Whiterun home, she found her fellow roommate, Rahm-Ku, sitting at a long table at the back of the first floor, counting coins. Setting her sword and shield down, Renee spoke to the Argonian.

"Good day at making coin, I see."

The sudden sound of Renee's voice startled the Mage as he turned his attention to the Nord.

"_Xuth_, Renee! You scared me."

Renee gave a laugh as she sat down across from the cursing Argonian.

"Sorry about that. I didn't think that you would be so focused on coin."

His heart calming down, Rahm-Ku returned to his calculations.

"My mother taught me and my elder sisters about the value of coin and how to manage it."

Giving an amused snort, Renee spoke again.

"Not to be racist or anything, but it sounds like you were better to have been born a Khajiit than an Argonian. You would make quite the merchant."

Rahm-Ku, focused on the coin, narrowed his eyes and his nostrils flared. Seeing that even the mention of Khajiit made him mad made Renee curious.

"You know, I would understand if you carried a hatred of Dark Elves, but you know that Cyrodiil kept most possible wars from happening between Elsweyr and Black Marsh, so the chances of an Argonian hating Khajiit are slim, especially since the two races were Dunmer slaves once."

The Mage turned his glare at the Warrior. Although he was taught often to be courteous, the Nord woman somehow knew how to push his buttons. Seeing that the conversation wasn't getting any better, Renee held up her hands and spoke.

"Look, I'm sorry. I didn't mean to say such bad history. But since we're going to be living and traveling together for a time, I'm only asking that you and J'Kiir make peace, maybe even actually say his name. The less hostility, the better."

As much as he wanted to disagree, Rahm-Ku knew that Renee was right. As much as he wanted to go to the College of Winterhold, what had happened at the watchtower kept picking at his mind. When he was at the Swindler's Den, the Mage had debated on using his newfound power against the bandits. There were indeed times when he wanted to use his Voice to fight, but halted when it came to the questions that came with it. In the end, he decided to wait until his questions were answered before he can use the Thu'um.

He was not the only one. Rahm-Ku knew that despite their differences, the Voice was something that he and J'Kiir both needed answers to. And he could see that Renee was tired of acting as mediator along with Hiccup.

"I guess it must be the merchant's blood within my veins. Mother always told me and my egg-sisters to keep an eye out for con artists."

Renee was surprised at how easily Rahm-Ku reasoned with her. Maybe it was because it was getting late. Sensing a yawn coming, Renee covered her mouth and let herself perform the action.

"(Yawn) Is at least one of the extensions done?"

Rahm-Ku pointed to the ceiling as he spoke.

"You go ahead and take the upstairs room. I'm going to finish counting and then I'll read for a while before I hit the bedroll."

"Just don't wait too long. Mages need sleep, too." Renee replied as she stood up and headed to the stairs.

Rahm-Ku laughed.

"Yes, Mother."

As the Nord went up the stairs, Rahm-Ku looked out at one of the glass windows and gazed at the moonlit sky.

"Speaking of the- I mean, J'Kiir, I wonder where he and Hiccup went."

* * *

><p>Hiccup and J'Kiir**

Rahm-Ku had every right to wonder. Because the day wasn't quite the picnic for them either. After reuniting with Toothless, the duo struggled to stay on the dragon during flight while carrying Barbas, the talking dog, so that he would not fall. Upon seeing Hiccup's mount, Barbas complained only once.

"Again with the flying lizards?"

After convincing the dog that this was the fastest way to Haemar's Shame, the two Dragonborn and the Daedric dog were in the air on the back of the Night Fury. Barbas gave the directions and Hiccup followed with Toothless, while J'Kiir fought in trying not to fall off the dragon. They passed over Helgen and landed at a snowy mountain pass with a cave entrance at a corner of the cobblestone path that connected Falkreath and, according to J'Kiir, the province of Riften. Barbas wagged his tail as he saw that cave.

"That's it. Haemar's Shame."

Hiccup didn't know who was more nervous in meeting a Daedric prince: Him? Or J'Kiir? After landing next to the cave, J'Kiir and Barbas were the first to get off Toothless, Hiccup being the last. As they approached the cave, Barbas spoke.

"Now, the cave is too narrow for your dragon. Either he stays out, or one of you stay with him."

Not wanting to leave J'Kiir alone in the cave, Hiccup chose to go in, telling Toothless to wait for him and that he wouldn't be long. Or so he hoped.

Upon entering the cave, J'Kiir caught a whiff of something and snarled, his ears flattening against his head and some of his fur stood on end. Seeing J'Kiir's reaction, Hiccup took out the dagger he

got from Whiterun and whispered.

"What is it?"

J'Kiir drew his bow and readied an arrow.

"Vampires."

Hearing this, Hiccup squeaked.

"Vampires?"

"Is there an echo in here? Yes, he said 'Vampires'." Barbas replied sarcastically.

This was not something Hiccup was prepared for. He had never met a real vampire, but he had encountered vampiric dragons in the recent past. But he has heard of human-sized vampires and was not looking forward to them. Thankfully, with J'Kiir and his deadly aim in the lead, Hiccup didn't have to worry about fighting the vampires as the Thief fired arrow after arrow and struck their targets dead.

After several caverns of vampires, the duo and the dog entered the final chamber, which held a large statue of a young man holding a horned mask. J'Kiir was swift and silent as he killed the remaining vampires, their thralls, as well as the master vampire. Once the master vampire was dead, Hiccup was given the signal to speak.

"J'Kiir. That was incredible. I've seen you use a bow before, but not with such stealth and precision."

J'Kiir gave a soft laugh.

"Well, I know how to fight vampires, not dragons."

It was then that Barbas spoke in surprised, looking at something hidden around J'Kiir's neck.

"Now I know why the sight of you and how you use your bow was familiar. That charm belonged to Nibarr Arendu, the Ash Viper of Morrowind!"

Hiccup looked at J'Kiir in confusion, wondering what Barbas meant, until J'Kiir pulled something out of his tunic. It was a gold sun within the center of a silver crescent moon. A multi-point star of platinum origin and the sun had a large diamond in its center gleamed in the torchlight.

"You know of Nibarr?" J'Kiir asked in a defensive tone.

Barbas panted as he spoke.

"You mean he hadn't told you? He was a favorite among Vile's list of champions. He was also the hardest mortal Vile had ever convinced to become a champion."

That made J'Kiir snarl at the charm, while Hiccup remained confused. Who was this Nibarr person? Again, Barbas answered him.

"I take it ol' Nibarr raised you?"

The answer was silence, but the saddened look in J'Kiir's eyes told the Viking that the Daedric dog was right. Tucking the charm back into his tunic, J'Kiir spoke, looking at the statue.

"Let's just get this over with."

His tone told Hiccup and Barbas not to ask any more questions. At least not for a while. Standing in front of the statue of the Daedric Prince, the Thief spoke.

"Lord Vile, we have a request of you."

To Hiccup's surprise, the statue answered in a mischievous voice.

"By all means, let's hear it. It's the least I could do, since you already helped me grant one final wish for my last worshippers."

Vile continued as the mortals looked at the vampire ash around them.

"They were suffering so from vampirism, and begged me for a cure. Then you came and ended their misery! I couldn't have planned it better myself!"

They then looked back to the statue.

"So, what's your heart's desire? What kind of deal can we strike? I don't even mind that Mephala got to you first before me, and I was looking forward to 'guiding' Nibarr's ward into my good graces first."

The Khajiit's ears pressed back in anger. Not wanting to anger the Prince, Hiccup spoke up.

"L-Lord Vile. We want you to take back Barbas."

Vile's tone change to one of a bitter sense.

"Ugh. That insufferable pup? Forget it. Request denied. No deal. I'm glad to be rid of him."

But he then spoke with slow realization.

"Even if it does mean I'm stuck in this pitiful shrine, in the back end of 'nowhere.'"

The trio waited a few seconds before Vile spoke again.

"Well 'perhaps there is a way he could earn his place back at my side. Maybe. No promises."

Hiccup looked to J'Kiir and whispered to him.

"Should we?"

"We have to if we want him to take back the dog." The Thief whispered back before turning to the statue. "Very well. What is your offer?"

Vile answered his mischievous tone back.

"There's an axe. An incredibly powerful axe. An axe powerful enough for me to have quite a bit of fun indeed. If you bring it to me, I'll grant Nibarr's ward my boon. No strings attached. No messy surprises. At least, not for you. As I recall, it's resting in Rimerock Burrow. Barbas can lead you right to it. The little mutt might even earn his place back at my side."

Then, the statue fell silent; allowing the trio to leave after J'Kiir collected the vampire ash.

As the Thief went to his craft, Hiccup spoke to Barbas while taking out his map.

"So what's the story with this axe we're sent to find?"

Barbas answered.

"The Rueful Axe. One of Clavicus' little jests. A wizard named Sebastian Lort had a daughter who worshiped Hircine, the Prince of the Hunt. When the daughter became a werewolf, it drove Sebastian over the edge. He couldn't stand to see his little girl take on such a bestial form. So the wizard wished for the ability to end his daughter's curse. Clavicus gave him an axe."

"Rather a cruel jest, isn't it?" Hiccup muttered as he looked to J'Kiir, who was done collecting the ash and was following Barbas to a closer entrance to the shrine.

"When it comes to Daedra, mortal misery, our misery, is entertainment to most of the Daedra. The only ones I suggest you trust are Azura and Meridia, although Peryite may be close enough. Now come on. We need to get that axe before nightfall."

As J'Kiir lead the way out, Hiccup decided to ask once more.

"Twos more questions: Who is Mephala and what did Clavicus mean that they got to you first?"

J'Kiir stood still. He knew these questions would come, but he never thought they'd come so soon.

"At least it's not from the lizard."

Turning around, J'Kiir withdrew the Ebony Blade for the first time since he equipped. He held it gently as he told Hiccup.

"Mephala is the Daedric Prince of Secrecy and Conspiracy. She's also known as the Webspinner, the Spider, and the Lady of Whispers. And I am her champion."

As they returned to Toothless and flew off toward Rimerock Barrow, J'Kiir told Hiccup (and an eavesdropping Barbas) about Nelkir and how J'Kiir became the champion of Mephala. By the time they've reached the entrance to the barrow, the entire story had been exposed to

Hiccup.

"So now you're going to be Clavicus' champion WHILE you're Mephala's?"

J'Kiir shrugged his shoulders while he brought out his bow.

"Well, the Princes aren't exactly picky about possession of the same champion. It's been done before with other people. Just pray you don't get Mehrunes Dagon or Molag Bal, that's all I'm going to say with a crazed sorcerer inside a cave so close."

Remembering why they were at this place in the first place, Hiccup became quiet and pulled out his dagger and followed J'Kiir into the cave. It didn't take long to find Sebastian Lort. The ramblings of the crazed mage lead them on until they've reached a large chamber surrounded by fire beings while a man in black robes stood over a long table made of stone.

"What are those things?" Hiccup asked J'Kiir in a whisper.

"Flame Antronachs. A kind of lesser Daedra summoned from Oblivion. But they'll disappear once I shoot Sebastian. In a fight with magic, most of the time the Daedra that are summoned are bound to the summoner until the mage dies. Then they return to Oblivion."

J'Kiir then lifted up his bow and drew back the arrow. He aimed for the mage's upper back and fired. One shot was all that it took to kill the mage and the Daedra returned to Oblivion and granted them passage to the axe on the table.

"There. That should do it. Go grab the axe while I loot the place."

Rolling his eyes, Hiccup approached the table and looked at the axe. It was a double-bladed war axe with wolfish designs on the blade. It seemed like a normal artifact, but Hiccup knew better than to judge a book by its cover, or in this case, an axe by its design.

Leaving the axe as it is, Hiccup decided to help J'Kiir with his looting. But just as he reached the farthest chamber that was converted to a small bedroom where his fellow Dragonborn was, J'Kiir handed him something. A book.

"What's this?" Hiccup asked as he took the book.

J'Kiir answered.

"A book about the Daedric Princes. For future reference."

"But I still don't know how to read your language." Hiccup protested.

J'Kiir again had an answer.

"Me and the others will teach you. After all, you did plan on staying in Tamriel for a while, right? Now, let me put everything in the saddlebags while you grab the axe."

After Hiccup left, J'Kiir took out the charm and sighed sadly. Nibarr

was not only his mentor when it came to the art of larceny, but he was there for him when the Khajiit's own father had died. While he loved his birth father, he grew to love Nibarr like a father as well, even if he was a Dark Elf.

The sound of Hiccup grunting brought J'Kiir out of his thoughts and led him back to the main chamber. His eyes saw Hiccup struggling pitifully to at most carry the axe. Placing his loot on the table, J'Kiir picked up the axe. It was light. He looked at Hiccup and sighed.

"We may have to help you build up your strength as well. Maybe give you a sword instead of a puny dagger."

An embarrassed Hiccup grabbed the loot and turned around.

"Let's just get back to Clavicus and go back to Whiterun."

* * *

><p>It was dusk upon the trio's return to Haemar's Shame and J'Kiir approached the statue of the Daedric Prince and the statue spoke.<p>

"Ah, you've got the axe! And my dog. Splendid."

J'Kiir spoke with a solid voice and mind.

"We're back. Now fulfill your end of the bargain."

"Excellent work. A hero and his faithful companions, retrieving the ancient artifact for the prince. It's almostâ€|storybook."

J'Kiir didn't like how Vile stalled on the last word. Knowing the Prince of Power's background, he had to be careful.

"Ah, but it almost seems a shame to give up a weapon like that away, doesn't it? I suppose I could be persuaded to let you keep itâ€|"

The statue then brought out the other half of this new deal.

"â€|but only if you use the axe to kill Barbas. Simple as that."

With a stern look, J'Kiir gave his answer.

"No deal. Take the axe and take back Barbas. Besides, I'm a thief. A large axe would give me no profit, but give me trouble."

The Daedra was displeased.

"Hmph. You're no fun at all. Guess I'll have to make my own fun elsewhere."

Then a thought came to him.

"And with the pup back, I'll be restored to my full power. There's a whole world just waiting for me!"

As the axe disappeared from the Thief's hands, Barbas spoke to him and Hiccup, who was standing nearby.

"I knew I could trust you two!"

The shrine then spoke to the dog.

"Yeah, yeah, dog gets master, master gets cosmic axe, everyone's happy. Just get over here, mutt."

Barbas spoke to the Dragonborn one last time before joining his master.

"Don't worry. I'll make sure he sees the light. I trusted you, now you trust me."

Just then, Barbas vanished in a flash of violet and right next to Vile now stands a statue of a giant dog. The Prince spoke out again.

"Ah, that feels so much better! You forget how nice supreme power feels until you've been stuck in a cave for a few years. It's a shame you wished for something as dull as me taking back the mutt. Quite the lack of imagination on your part. A lack of ambition like that really out to be punished. Perhaps turning you into a worm, or maybe a few decades ofâ€¦"

There was a pause as J'Kiir and Hiccup began to worry about what Clavicus might do, until the Prince spoke in a surrendered tone.

"Oh, fine. Have my boon and be done with it. I've got more interesting deals to make anyway. Then again, Nibarr always was a shrewd business man, even if he was a thief and assassin. Who knows? Maybe one day our paths will meet again. Hopefully by then you will have gained some ambition."

Another flash of violet light appeared and a strange mask appeared. It was similar to the curled horned head Vile had in his hand, only it was made of steel and not stone. As soon as they left the cave, Hiccup asked.

"A mask? All that work for a mask?"

J'Kiir answered.

"Not just any mask. I've heard of this particular mask before. This is the Masque of Clavicus Vile. A powerful Daedric artifact just the same. Legend says that the masque was created when a noblewoman, who had been severely disfigured by a spiteful servant at a young age, made a dark deal with Clavicus Vile. It didn't change her looks, but upon wearing the masque, the noble got respect and admiration. She even got married to a baron. But a year and a day after the wedding, Vile took back the mask and the woman's face was revealed. Disgusted, the baron banished his pregnant wife from his household. And twenty one years later, he was slain by their daughter."

"Not exactly as happy a tale as the story of the axe." Hiccup spoke sarcastically.

J'Kiir nodded.

"I will only use the masque only when necessary. I don't know when Vile will want the masque back, but I am going to try and avoid a similar fate. In the meantime, I'm going to keep it in my 'Daedric Artifacts Collection' when we get home."

Hiccup agreed and once they were out of the shrine, they flew immediately back to Whiterun. With night claiming the sky, they both knew that J'Kiir would have to make a profit in the morning. After unsaddling Toothless, who had to sleep outside due to his size, J'Kiir and Hiccup entered Breezehome and set the loot to the sides of the door before retreating to their bedrolls. Rahm-Ku was in his, fast asleep with one of the Conjuraton books open and on his chest and snored lightly. Careful not to disturb the Mage, the Thief and the Rider got into bed and fell asleep.

* * *

><p>Next Time: The boys take the day off and Renee has one more adventure before she can be free to head to High Hrothgar with the other Dragonborn. But while in the musty cairn, Renee will discover a secret within the Companions. One that may have an effect on her.

Phew! This took me 15 pages on Microsoft Word. A new record for me.

_I've been reading two Elder Scrolls novels and I found that "_Xuth_" is an Argonian curse word. Don't worry, I'll mention the Hist later on. _

Please review.

10. The Secret of the Circle

****Chapter 10****

****The Secret of the Circle****

Sorry about the wait. The last time I updated, it was a SOPA message because someone worked me up saying that it was back. To my embarrassment, it was a hoax. So sorry about that.

Anyway, I've altered what I intended for this chapter a bit, giving Hiccup a solo quest earlier than planned.

I do not own The Elder Scrolls or How To Train Your Dragon. Just the OC's.

* * *

><p>Morning came to Skyrim and the Dragonborn were still in bed. Well, save for one. Renee woke up as the dawn struck her face and looking out a nearby window, she could see the mountain that she and her new friends have to climb: the Throat of the World. It had been a couple of days since she helped restore the Gildergreen and with doing nothing but odd jobs at Jorrvaskr, Renee decided it was time for her and the three men down below to venture to the lonely

monastery of High Hrothgar and answer the summons of the Greybeards.<p>

After getting dressed in her armor and equipping her sword as well as grabbing her shield, Renee quietly walked down the stairs so as not to wake the Mage, the Thief, and the Rider sleeping in bedrolls below. The extensions to Breezehome began the day after her 'excursion' to the Eldergleam Sanctuary and this was the day they would be finished. The trio of men were getting sick of lying down on bedrolls every night and were looking forward to warm beds. So Renee was going to wait until the next day to leave, since it would be a while before they would sleep in another bed again.

Wanting the meal to be quick, Renee grabbed a sweet roll and headed out the door and headed to Jorrvaskr. She had finished the roll upon her arrival when Aela walked up to her and spoke.

"Hey, young blood. Skjor was just looking for you."

This confounded Renee.

"What does he want?"

Aela just shrugged her shoulders.

"He didn't say, but you'd better move fast. There's probably something I could find for you to do, but best to check with him."

As Aela left, Renee wondered what the older Companion wanted with her. Hopefully it was something short. She found Skjor outside, barking orders at other rookies who had joined earlier that year. She hailed him and he dismissed the now-grateful rookies.

"Ah, there you are."

"You wanted to see me?" Renee asked.

Skjor nodded with a serious look on his faceâ€|well, more serious than the young Warrior had seen in her short time in the Companions.

"I did. Your time, it seems, has come."

The words were cryptic to Renee, so she folded her arms and spoke.

"What do you mean?"

Again, Skjor answered.

"Last week, a scholar came to us. He said he knew where we could find another fragment of Wuuthrad. He seemed a fool to me, but if he's right, the honor of the Companions demands that we seek it out."

Renee was confused.

"What is Wuuthrad and what does this have to do with me?"

Skjor answered her.

"It is the battle-axe of Ysgramor. It is a symbol of the Companions. As for what it has to do with you, this is a simple errand, but the time is right for it to be your Trial. Carry yourself with honor, and you'll become a true Companion. Farkas will be your Shield-Sibling on this venture, whelp. He'll answer any questions you have. Try not to disappoint. Or to get him killed."

With that, Skjor left to perform other errands, leaving a frustrated Renee behind.

"And I was hoping to leave today."

She looked around for Farkas, finding him out in the training yard. Hailing him, Renee spoke.

"Farkas. Skjor says you're going to be my Shield-Brother?"

Placing his sword into his scabbard, Farkas spoke.

"So I'm told. Let's see if you impress. I'll meet you at Dustman's Cairn when you're ready."

Nodding, Renee parted ways and returned to Breezehome to let her new friends know they would be delayed for a while longer. Upon reaching the house, she saw Hiccup standing outside the door, stretching while Toothless yawned in his sleep.

She hailed the rider.

"Morning, Hiccup."

Seeing Renee, Hiccup spoke.

"Morning. Where are you off to?"

She told him.

"I haven't been able to ask anyone if I could have some time off yet. By the time I was about to ask, I was loaded with some sort of Trial. I have to go to a cairn with one of the Companions to fetch a piece of a battleax that belonged to the Companions' founder."

Hiccup shook his head as he looked towards the main gate.

"I hope we get going soon. I'd like to find out more about this power we have. There's nothing in our Viking legends that could equal to what we have experienced at the watchtower and I'm still learning to read the local language. And, to be honest, when I absorbed that dragon's soul, I can't help but feel"

He paused for a moment before he finished.

"that it's happened to me before. But that can't be right."

He fed Toothless the basket of fish he bought the other day and looked back to the Warrior.

"In the meantime, I might as well work on some projects I was

thinking about."

Renee raised her eyebrow.

"Projects?"

Hiccup started to count off his projects with his fingers as he explains.

"Well, since I lost the shield I made during the storm shortly before our arrest and near-death experience in Helgen, I need to make a new one at the forge. Adrianne said I can use it if I bring or buy my own materials."

"But I could've bought you a shield yesterday." Renee responded, placing her sword hand on her hip out of habit.

"The shield I made has a few modifications of my own design, such as a grappling hook."

Now Renee understood.

"Alright. That's one with an explanation."

Hiccup then began to saddle Toothless.

"I also need to make a few upgrades to Toothless' gear. If we are going to travel together, I figure I should make the saddle seated for four instead of two. The one I fly on is the one from when I was 15 and only seats two."

"Any other projects?" Renee asked.

Hiccup lifted his metal leg while leaning on Toothless.

"I've been thinking about what J'Kiir said at Bleak Falls Barrow and after what we've been through the other day, I need to make a new leg that can be more silent and efficient."

Renee once again raised her eyebrow.

"The other day?"

Hiccup froze, remembering that J'Kiir had asked that they would not tell Renee and Rahm-Ku about getting involved with Daedric Princes and decided to keep the subject of his leg going.

"Doesn't matter. What does matter is that I'm due to an upgrade on my leg myself."

Deciding to let the other day go, Renee placed her hand under her chin, her elbow supported by her shield arm.

"Mind if I have a look and give suggestions?"

Hiccup wondered what Renee was thinking about, but complied as he sat down on a crate and removed his artificial leg. After obtaining the leg, Renee carefully examined it and spoke after a few minutes.

"It is a good leg if you are a walking civilian. But if you want to

sneak better, among other things, I'd say you need to make maybe one or three new legs."

She then returned the leg to Hiccup as she continued.

"For metal, I would highly recommend either Orichalcum or refined Malachite. Both are green in color, so in grassy or forested areas, it can be easily hidden. The difference would be that Orichalcum is a heavier metal than malachite, so you would have to make the rest of your leg a bit stronger in order to lift it. For snowy regions and deserts, I would say refined moonstone and Corundum respectively. You can even use Dwemer metal if you can find some. But even if you chose one of those metal, you would still have to do something about the noise. I would say the use of leather or a strong cloth as a sort of a cushion. Of course, if you talk to Farengar, I'm sure he can enchant the leg with a muffle enchantment, but that may be a bit pricy. For the design, I would say make it look more like a foot, but if you remember the feet of those dragons, you can use your leg as a weapon as well. Any questions?"

Hiccup's mouth just hung open in shock and amazement. He had never expected Renee to know so much about smithing, even if he didn't know what the metals were or the subject of enchantments.

"How did youâ€¦"

His words trailed off, but Renee laughed at his confusion.

"You know, I keep forgetting you're not from Tamriel. Orcs are among the best blacksmiths on the entire continent. So I picked up a few things growing up in the Fangs."

Seeing the sun getting higher, Renee waved to her friend.

"I better go. I'm wasting daylight. See you later, Hiccup! And tell the others I said hi."

Hiccup just waved as the young woman left for the cairn.

He looked Toothless asked, "Did I just get shown up by a girl?"

* * *

><p>Reneeâ€¦|

The cairn was only two miles from Whiterun, so Renee took the time to enjoy the walk, knowing that Farkas would be at the cairn. She still had her supplies from her Eldergleam expedition, so she didn't need to go shopping. But as she walked down the cobblestone path, she couldn't help but set her gaze at the watchtower and the four sets of dragon bones surrounding it. The memory of what happened was still fresh in her mind and even now, she could still sense the fire on the watchtower, the sound of the dragons' roars, and the smell of blood on the battlefield.

Seeing the site made Renee want to go to High Hrothgar more than ever. If she and her friends really do have a power that once belonged to the emperor Tiber Septim, Talos himself, then what is in store for the four of them? All Renee wanted was some answers to this mystery as did the others.

"If I hurry and get that piece with Farkas, then I may be able to get that time off."

It only took a half an hour before she reached the cairn, Farkas awaiting her at the opening of the tomb.

"About time you got here, young blood. Ready to go?"

Renee nodded.

"Let's find that axe piece."

Upon entering the cairn, the stench of the dead entered Renee's nostrils and with her past experiences, she kept her sword and shield drawn. Which proved to be a good thing as both Shield-Siblings noticed something about the first chamber. Long-dead Drauger laid about on the stone floor, lit lanterns, and supplies for what seemed to be an expedition.

"Looks like someone's been digging here. And recently. Tread lightly." Said Farkas.

"Got it." Renee muttered.

The two of them passed the first chamber and after walking down a tunnel leading to the next room, Farkas spoke again.

"Be careful around the burial stones. I don't want to haul you back to Jorrvaskr on my back."

Renee shook her head as she looked on.

"Don't worry about it. I've dealt with Draugr before."

Farkas gave a half-laugh.

"Is that so, lass? When was that?"

Renee gave him an answer in a whisper.

"Bleak Falls Barrow. On the same day I joined the Companions."

Just as she said that, the familiar sound of walking corpses filled the air. The two Shield-Siblings wasted no time in taking them out. Renee provided Farkas with a shield while he took on multiple opponents with his greatsword. She also dealt a few with her sword, careful so as not to get herself in a bind. Little did she know that while she fought, she was being evaluated by Farkas, who was by far slightly impressed.

Once the last of the Draugr was once again dead, the two continued onward toward a third chamber. It was about as large as the main hall of Jorrvaskr, and like in the first chamber, this one showed signs of habitation.

"Let's split up and see what we can find in this room." Farkas replied bluntly as he began to look around.

But something didn't feel right to Renee.

It was too quiet.

There should at least be some Draugr lurking in the room.

As she looked around, she came across a small annex of the chamber with a lever at the other side. Curious, she pulled the lever, only to release her grip as the sound of metal came from behind her. She turned and cursed under her breath. There was an iron gate keeping her in the annex. Hearing the sound earlier, Farkas approached the cell as Renee tried to pull the lever again.

"Damn these crypts to Oblivion!"

Farkas shook his head as he saw, too, that the lever was stuck.

"Now look what you've gotten yourself into. No worries. Just sit tight. I'll find the release."

This was defiantly going into Renee's mental book of personal embarrassments as she cursed again. But just as she was about ready to kick the gate out of frustration, several figures came from the opening just next to her cell. They looked like bandits to Renee, but they carried silver weapons. But why?

"It's time to die, dog."

One of the bandits spoke as Farkas readied his sword.

"We knew you'd be coming here."

A second spoke as they begin to gang up on Farkas.

"Your mistake, Companion!" Said a third.

Two of the bandits spoke to each other in a whisper.

"Which one is that?"

"It doesn't matter. He wears that armor, he dies."

Renee didn't even notice a difference between her armor and Farkas'. But as he grew close, she could see that it was indeed different from what she was used to. Was it made by Eorland?

Then, the last bandit spoke.

"Killing you would make an excellent story."

To Renee's surprise, Farkas was rather calm about the situation. What he said next made Renee's stomach flip.

"None of you will be alive to tell it."

Then, it happened.

Just as Renee was about to think of something, Farkas dropped his sword and began to shake. She was ready to worry for him when suddenly every spot on his skin began to grow thick fur, his body

growing three times his original size, and his face changing into something animal-like with a tail to match. Renee was between shock and horrified as she realized what Farkas was.

Farkas was a werewolf.

Renee could only watch from the safety of her cell as the werewolf attacked the bandits. His sudden transformation startled them, but they managed to start fighting. Unfortunately, the werewolf was too quick as it slashed the bandits in the vitals and bit the necks on the remainder, some of the blood splatter ending up on Renee a few times. A couple managed to cleave the beast's flesh, but it wasn't enough as they died in their own blood once the werewolf was finished with them.

Once the last of the bandits were dead, the werewolf dashed off into the next room. Renee waited in torturous silence until the gate slide back up. Keeping her blade at the ready, she waited for the werewolf to come back. He did, only in his human form, much to Renee's relief.

"I hope I didn't scare you." Farkas spoke.

Renee managed to kick the words she wanted to say out of her mouth.

"What in Oblivion was that?"

Farkas answered her, somehow expecting the strain in Renee's voice.

"It's a blessing given to some of us. We can be like wild beasts. Fearsome."

Renee gulped.

"Then does that mean you're going to turn me into a werewolf?"

Farkas shook his head.

"Oh, no. Only the Circle have the beastblood. Prove your honor to be a Companion. 'Eyes on the prey, not the horizon.'"

He then looked down the tunnel where he freed her.

"We should keep moving. Still the Draugr to worry about."

Renee nodded, almost forgetting about the Draugr for the moment. She had never expected this from the Companions. She thought they were a Warrior's Guild like the Sabre Fangs. But an entire group of people as werewolves?

What had she gotten herself into?

* * *

><p>Hiccup was

By the time Renee discovered the secret of the Companions, Hiccup was

ready for flight. He had spent a good portion of the morning not making a new leg, but getting drilled by J'Kiir. After hearing about what J'Kiir was attempting, without knowledge of Daedric influences, Rahm-Ku agree to help. Unfortunately, with the extensions of their Whiterun home and the furnishings that went with it, Rahm-Ku had to go to work again. This time, he was planning on purchasing spell books to help a beginning mage.

Thankfully, Hiccup had the time to make a new shield. It was of similar size, but no design. He was planning on doing that later once his training was over. The training consisted mostly on the Khajiit's kind of exercises, including how to work a bow. J'Kiir took the time while Hiccup worked at the forge to create a simple bow that was up to Hiccup's current strength. With the additional purchase of some iron arrows, he worked on teaching Hiccup how to use a bow.

Needless to say, Hiccup ended up with a large bruise on his left arm thanks to the bowstring. So when Rahm-Ku called in J'Kiir to help make some more money, the Viking was relieved and decided to celebrate with a flight around the hold of Whiterun. The jarl had informed Hiccup the last time he was in Dragonsreach that he sent messengers to every town in and around the hold, so Hiccup was free to fly.

After saddling up Toothless, the pair took off. As they flew, Hiccup couldn't help but be amazed at the size of Skyrim. And it was only one province in Tamriel! From his vantage point, he could see much of the north-northeastern parts of the land covered in snow. There were mountains that overlooked Whiterun from the north while concealing another hold. He wanted to go higher see more, but with the vicious dragons about, he had to be careful.

Hiccup flew for what seemed to be an hour when he came across a land of mountains. He looked at his map and saw that they were nearing a part of Skyrim.

"That must be the Reach." He told his dragon.

As they circled northward once they made it to the boarder, Toothless sensed something coming from the Reach. Suddenly, he turned direction, towards the strange feeling while Hiccup was trying to maintain control.

"What the-? What's going on, bud?"

He tried to make his dragon turn, but Toothless wouldn't obey. This worried the Viking a bit, as he never wanted to experience what happened with that storm again. As they flew, Hiccup caught something in his sights and it wasn't good. It was another one of those 'word walls' like the one he and his friends found in Bleak Falls Barrow. But the bad thing was that there was a dragon sitting on top of the word wall. And it spotted them.

"For crying out loud!" Hiccup cursed as the dragon flew up and sped towards them.

Thankfully, Toothless managed to snap out of his trance and followed Hiccup's maneuvering to a 'T'. Thankfully, Hiccup remembered what he did at the watchtower.

"Come on, Toothless! Let's show him how we defeated his friend!"

Toothless didn't need to be told twice as he flew straight into the sky, the dragon following, then diving toward the ground before making the shot.

Unfortunately, the enemy dragon dodged it.

"Oh, come on!" Hiccup complained as he steered Toothless away from the ground.

The dragon didn't let up either in his pursuit. As they flew, Hiccup spoke to Toothless again.

"Looks like we have to come up with a new tactic."

As they dodged the dragon left and right, Hiccup looked to the environment for a plan. Nothing but mountains and stone. His eyes widened with realization.

"Stoneâ€¦ That's it!"

Under Hiccup's instruction, the pair flew off towards an area that was away from a village Hiccup saw nearby and once he spotted the exact spot where he was looking for, Hiccup placed Toothless into a hover.

"Get ready, bud."

The dragon was yards away until Hiccup called out.

"Now, Toothless! Plasma blast!"

Toothless fired at the side of the mountain that Hiccup directed him to and flew out of the way just in time as a massive rockslide fell onto the enemy dragon. The dragon tried to regain flight, but was overwhelmed by the boulders that came down. Swiftly, he struck the ground, boulders and stone piling on top of him. Hiccup flew close to see what damage was done when the ethereal threads he had seen before soared straight to him, allowing Hiccup to, as the jarl and the guards had put it, absorbed the dragon's soul.

Once the threads faded, Hiccup spoke.

"I don't think I'll ever get used to that."

He then steered Toothless back to the location Hiccup found on his map called "Dragontooth Crater" and landed in front of the Word Wall. Dismounting Toothless, Hiccup approached the wall and, like at the barrow, a single word shone brightly. Hiccup didn't even have time to debate whether or not he should get the others when the word imprinted itself in Hiccup's mind.

"_**Su!***_

Like with the watchtower, the dragon soul Hiccup absorbed unlocked the word's power, allowing Hiccup to test it. _**"***_

**Su!***

At the sound of the word, Hiccup felt a sensation in his arms. Remembering that the bow and quiver were still strapped to his back, he reached for them, only to drawing them in a split second, which was unusual to Hiccup. He figured after a few tries that the new word allows him to use weapons more quickly than normally.

"I wonder what other words are out there." He spoke aloud.

With the new word, Hiccup noticed that Toothless was looking at something above the crater. Hiccup looked up and saw some sort of faint smoke come from the ledge above.

"What in the world?" He asked as he mounted Toothless again.

After taking off, the duo landed on the ledge, where, to their surprise, a brown-furred Khajiit in tattered clothing and a hood tend to an alchemy table much like the one in Breezehome. There was also a large pot set in front of a tree and some sort of stone structure.

Just then, the Khajiit spoke.

"Ah, a wanderer, yes? No? Pilgrim, perhaps? Have you come to commune with Peryite, Taskmaster and blighted Lord?"

Hiccup raised his eyebrow at the strange Khajiit.

"Peryite?"

Sensing that the teen didn't know, the Khajiit explained to him, not minding the dragon behind the boy.

"The Prince of Pestilence. He is the pus in the wound. Oh, proper ones curl their noses, but it's pus that drinks foul humors and restores the blood. I worship Peryite, yes, because sometimes the world can only be cleansed by disease."

The description disgusted Hiccup, but turned his attention to Toothless, who was sniffing the vat before gesturing his head to the vat. Now Hiccup was even more confused.

"What is it, Toothless?" T

he Khajiit looked up at the pair and figured it out.

"Peryite wishes to commune with you, young one."

Hiccup turned to the Khajiit and spoke.

"How can you be certain?"

The Khajiit answered him.

"Last time Kesh communed with Him, he said to watch out for certain signs. You bear those signs."

Hiccup wondered if Kesh was telling the truth or not. One thing for certain, even he was wondering about the Prince of Pestilence.

Deciding to take the risk, Hiccup spoke.

"How exactly do I commune with Peryite?"

Kesh answered again.

"Not everyone has the stomach required to entreat my Lord. But Kesh likes you, friend. There is a way Peryite may speak to us who will take Him in. Kesh can prepare an incense that will do the job. But Kesh needs four things."

"And those things are?" Hiccup asked.

"A pinch of Vampire Dust, a flawless ruby, the shavings of an ingot of silver, and a Deathbell flower."

Remembering that he and J'Kiir had yet unpacked what they looted at Sebastian Lort's cave, Hiccup dug around in the saddlebags until he found each item, the flower J'Kiir had showed him when they were looting was still there. He handed the items to Kesh, who then prepared the incense.

Once that was done, Kesh poured the incense into the vat and spoke.

"All that is left is to inhale the fumes."

Hiccup was hesitant, but it was clear that Toothless wasn't going anyplace until his rider had spoken with the Prince. Swiftly, Hiccup inhaled the fumes.

Once he did, his vision dimmed and as he looked between the stone and the tree, he saw a pack of ethereal skeevers and heard a voice come from them.

"Breath deep, mortal. I would have you hear me well, so let these vapors fill your lungs."

Hiccup made the connection.

The pack of skeevers was Peryite.

"What do you want me to do to cause my dragon to take me here?"

Peryite spoke.

"I have watched you for some time, you know. Even before you left your island. The decisions you've made intrigued me, and I wonder if you are the proper agent for a task of mine."

Hiccup gulped, unknowingly inhaling more vapors.

"What task is that?"

The Prince of Pestilence answered.

"I sent a blessing to Mundus, the realm in which you reside. A wasting plague that infected a scattering of Breton villages. One of my monks, the elf Orchendor, was sent to gather these Afflicted. He

shepherded them into Bthardamz for me, but has since lost his way."

The Prince then spoke with anger.

"I will not stand for betrayal. I want you to go to Bthardamz and kill Orchendor, in my name."

Now Hiccup was hesitant. He had never killed another man before. Dragons, yes. But this was not only his first act of killing a man, be it elf or human, but he had only Toothless for help with Renee at Dustman's Cairn and Rahm-Ku working with J'Kiir to make a profit. He wanted to refuse outright. But he also remembered what he learned in Falkreath. There was no way he can refuse a Daedric Prince outright without suffering some sort of consequence. And since Peryite was the Prince of Diseases, no doubt that he may afflict him with some sort of illness that could be torture to the Viking until death claimed him.

In the end, there was no other choice

"I've heard your request. Release me."

Peryite spoke again, satisfied.

"So you have, mortal. Go now. Kill Orchendor."

Hearing this, Hiccup back away and allowed his body to expel the vapors. Once that was done and he could no longer see Peryite, he turned his gaze to Kesh and spoke.

"Peryite has asked me to kill an elf name Orchendor in a place called 'Bthardamz.'"

Hearing this, Kesh spoke.

"Ah, yes. Kesh knows of the Bosmer called Orchendor and of Bthardamz. It is a Dwemer ruin towards the east. It is not far from the shrine. Maybe a fifteen minute walk. But careful of whatever's inside."

Once Kesh marked Bthardamz on his map, Hiccup mounted Toothless and headed off to kill Orchendor.

* * *

><p>Please Review and no flames.

11. Tainted Blood

****Chapter 11****

****Tainted Blood****

Hi, I'm back. Sorry this was so late. I had just finished the spring semester and now I have plenty of time to work on my fics. :D

* * *

><p>Hiccup marveled at the sight of Bthardamz in the sky. He had seen

stone structures, but the Dwemer ruin was very unique. True, he didn't know what Dwemer were, but he was curious as to what was inside, other than Afflicted people and the elf Orchendor.<p>

"Note to self: ask the others what Dwemer are."

Hiccup muttered to himself. After hearing about Orchendor from the Daedric Prince Peryite and his loyal worshipper, Kesh, the Viking knew that the ruins were going to be guarded. Which made it no surprise when he saw some people standing guard outside.

There was a huge downside to this little 'trip.' In order to satisfy Peryite and keep himself from facing the wrath of the Prince, Hiccup had to enter the ruins, past Afflicted Bretons, and kill Orchendor. At least one of the upsides is that he wouldn't have to kill anyone else unless there was no choice.

Much to his relief, Hiccup found that the doorway to the ruins itself was unguarded, enabling them to land with ease, quietly so as not to alarm anyone. Dismounting Toothless, Hiccup took an empty money satchel and some cloth to recreate the silencer that Rahm-Ku made in Bleak Falls Barrow.

"We have to be as quiet as possible, bud. If I'm have to kill someone, I'd rather let it be Orchendor."

Toothless let out a low rumble, concerned for his friend and rider. Hiccup petted Toothless and whispered. "

I know, Toothless. But I have to do this. If not for Peryite, then for myself. If I'm to succeed Dad one day, I'll have to *gulp* stomach such acts."

This was actually a half-truth. The other half was for Hiccup to grow as a warrior. Tamriel clearly had more dangers than Berk, some of them mortal, and Hiccup had to pass such a hurtle in order to press on. Taking out the Orcish dagger he had obtained from Jarl Balgruuf out of its scabbard, Hiccup snuck inside, with Toothless behind him.

* * *

><p>Insideâ€|

Hiccup was amazed more at the interior of Bthardamz. Amidst the integrate stone carvings on the walls were all sorts of metal contraptions _centuries _ahead of his time. As he and Toothless made their way down, Hiccup saw all sorts of things that the mysterious Dwemer had crafted including large pipes that vent out steam from time to time. There were also more of those vats that Kesh had, but they were filled with a different sort of mixture than the incense Kesh used.

He grabbed Toothless' saddle and kept him from getting too close.

"Wait a minute, Toothless."

The dragon looked to his rider as he continued.

"Those vats might have some sort of poison or something. Let's keep moving."

The Night Fury didn't argue as they made their way down the halls, quietly passing some Afflicted on the way. Of course, now Hiccup saw what Bretons looked like, but halted any conclusions until he spoke to the three he trusted the most in Skyrim.

The pair continued down the halls until they came to a large chamber, where a triad of Afflicted gathered around a large vat, conversing amongst themselves. Remembering what J'Kiir had taught him over the past couple of days, Hiccup kept to the shadows, keeping one hand on Toothless' saddle, the other holding the knife.

The Afflicted didn't even acknowledge the two as they snuck past to the next corridor. At the end was an even larger chamber, with more piping but less smooth structures. Taking out his makeshift spyglass, Hiccup took a look at their surroundings from a safe distance. And a good thing too, as there were Afflicted walking around, guarding the way forward, which was barred.

"Shoot! We'll have to find a way to lower that gate." Hiccup whispered. "But first, we have to get past those people."

The sound of the iron arrows on Hiccup's back gave the Viking an idea. After placing the spyglass aside, Hiccup took the hunting bow J'Kiir gave him and took out an arrow.

"Ok. Steady~." Hiccup whispered as he remembered his lesson from that morning.

Hiccup aimed for the wall underneath the exit and fired. The sound of the arrow tapping caught the attention of the guards and once they left their posts to investigate the noise, Hiccup mounted on Toothless and the Night Fury made a mad, but quiet, dash to the other side of the room. Sure enough, there was a lever at the other side.

Quickly, Hiccup pulled the lever and fired another arrow at where he and Toothless were when he fired the first arrow and like before, the guards left to check out the noise. Once the two of them were past the threshold, Hiccup beamed at Toothless.

"Looks like J'Kiir's training finally kicked in."

But he didn't say too much. He didn't want his gods or Tamriel's to take away the luck he had thus far because of something he said.

As they continued their way down the corridors, Hiccup could clearly see that the Dwemer were geniuses when it comes to machinery once they came across their first trap. It was a spinning blade that appeared from the floor and made its way up and down a small track. The two watched the trap for a few moments before Hiccup got on the saddle and rode him over the trap once it closed up for a few seconds. The Night Fury barely made it as he jumped over the trap and landed on the other side, with his tail intact as well.

With that trap taken care of, the duo continued past a gate, but slowed down as they saw light reflecting off the stone wall.

"Wait a minute, bud." Hiccup whispered as he dismounted.

He crept along the curved wall opposite of the lit one until he was able to see a small group of Afflicted standing in front of two separate sets of doors. Unfortunately, there was no other way to get to the door on the right as the door on the left led only to a small separate section of the room.

"Well, that's just great. Now how to get to those doors?" Hiccup sarcastically asked.

He ran out of arrows to distract the Bretons with and there was hardly any room to sneak past them. He could try and have Toothless walk on the lit wall, but they would still be spotted by them. And if his suspicions are confirmed, then there is no doubt that they would attack him and Toothless in order to protect the Viking's quarry.

It was then that Toothless got an idea. Leaning back in the shadows, Toothless used his wing to bring a surprised Hiccup to his body and began to close his wings around them.

"Toothless! What are you-?" Hiccup's whispers were cut as Toothless let out a plasma blast up the corridor where they came, gaining the attention of the present Afflicted.

"What was that?" Hiccup could hear one of them ask.

"It came from the upper room." Said another.

Hiccup held his breath as he heard footsteps past him and his dragon, a break in the wings enabling him to see the Afflicted pass the two of them not at all noticing the dragon or his rider.

It was then that Hiccup realized what Toothless was doing. He was using his natural black scale as camouflage in the shadows of the ruins. Then, using his plasma blast at another location, he caused a distraction to lure the Afflicted away from their posts, granting the two of them easy access to the next area.

Once the Afflicted were out, the Night Fury released his rider and allowed him to remount.

"Good thinking, bud. Now let's find this Orchendor so we can get out of here."

To Hiccup's surprise, he found that he was looking forward to finding and killing the elf. It must be because of his conflicting desires to escape the ruins and end the quest given him by Peryite, and observe the various machines within Bthardamz.

Seriously, he had some ideas coming to form in his mind and he wanted to see more and cause those ideas to bloom.

* * *

><p>After passing a few more chambers and it was becoming evident that they were getting close to Orchendor. There were less and less Afflicted as they passed each chamber and more of, to Hiccup's amazement, Dwemer machinery. Not only did he and Toothless come across more traps and harmless machinery, but they came across metal

spiders and metal spheres that unfolded into human-like weaponry.<p>

These machines were the kinds of things Hiccup had no problem in taking out when it comes to morality.

It wasn't easy at first, having never fought machines before, and unfortunately after the first dozen, Toothless ran out of firepower, leaving him and Hiccup to use their own skills. Of course, Hiccup took advantage of his Dragonborn abilities and either used `_**fus**_` to send the machines back or he used `_**su**_` to increase his melee attack.

Granted, all he had was a basic shield and a dagger made of strange metal, but at least he had come prepared.

The two of them had reached the upper level of the second-to-last chamber when Hiccup heard the sound of heavy footsteps coming from the corridor that they needed to go through. Looking around, Hiccup found a flat surface amongst a pile of rocks and motioned Toothless for them to hide amongst the rocks while they waited for whatever came out.

The Viking nearly shouted in surprise as they saw what came out of the corridor. It was a twelve foot metal golem made of the same golden Dwemer machinery in the rest of the ruin. Its heavy footsteps were met with steam coming from various parts of the mechanical body as it walked past the duo's hiding place and made its way down the stone path.

"I think I'm in Valhalla." The Viking whispered as he managed to conceive an idea after seeing the golem.

If he could somehow find a spare golem leg, he could use it as a blueprint to create his new prosthetic!

This was now officially a time where he wished J'Kiir, Rahm-Ku, and Renee were with him. J'Kiir had the stealth that surpassed his own. Rahm-Ku could use his magic to short it out by sending a lightning bolt or a few at it. And Renee obviously would have the physical strength to take down the machine.

The Viking was now more envious with his fellow Dragonborn than before.

"I'll have to get them to help me get stronger." He muttered to himself before giving Toothless the all-clear to move.

Following the corridors and taking out more of those Dwemer spiders, the Viking and his dragon finally found themselves in a large chamber. Carefully, Hiccup looked around a corner and saw a brown-skinned elf as he was mixing a potion at a work table.

It was Orchendor.

Hiccup's heart suddenly launched up into his throat, his ears beating loudly as he observed his target. He motioned Toothless to wait for him as he struggled to devise a plan. He could wait a while until the elf fell asleep, then he could creep up to do the deed.

Unfortunately, it had only been a couple of hours since he left Whiterun and he did not have the time to wait. And of course, he could not attack outright. Orchendor no doubt had magic at his disposal, something Hiccup was not ready to face without the proper training.

In the end, he'd have a better chance if he took the idea out of J'Kiir's playbook and assassinate him right there. And he wasn't even good at sneaking, so what was his chance for a successful kill?

Right about 5%.

His memories of their first meeting with Clavicus Vile and their excursion into Bleak Falls Barrow, Hiccup crept carefully toward Orchendor. With each step, his heartbeat got louder with each pump. Sweat poured from his brow as worries gathered into the pit of his stomach.

Would his prosthetic fail him and make a sound that could alert the long-eared elf?

Could in a single second Orchendor turn around and spot him?

Could he even stomach taking a life?

His mind became silent as he found himself within stabbing distance of Orchendor, the elf kept on adding various ingredients to the mortar, unaware of the assassin wannabe behind him. Knowing that there was no other way to spare himself from the wrath of Peryite, Hiccup raised his dagger and plunged it into the elf's back, severing his spine and piercing his heart and right lung. Orchendor, in surprise, found himself on one knee, giving Hiccup the opportunity to cut his throat.

"I'm sorry." Hiccup spoke softly just as he performed the vile deed.

Orchendor then fell to the ground, dead in a growing pool of his own blood.

With the elf dead, Hiccup's heart went back into his chest and his gut calming only little. He had done it. He had taken a life at the expense of a Daedric Prince. As much as he disliked it, Hiccup was also proud of himself for overcoming a great hurdle. He still needed work, but he was also confident that he would grow stronger.

Smelling the elf's blood, Toothless left his hiding place and nuzzled his rider in attempt to comfort him. Hiccup pressed his head on Toothless' as he spoke.

"Come on, Toothless. Let's go tell Peryite andâ€¦go back to Whiterun."

Hiccup was tempted to say "go home," only to catch himself as he remembered everything that had happened since he left Berk. The Imperials and the Stormcloaks. The mysterious black dragon from Helgen. And of course, this "Dragonborn" business.

Especially the Dragonborn business.

Eyeing the exit, the duo were about to leave when Hiccup noticed something lying on a nearby table: a Dwemer golem leg. It was as if the gods of both Tamriel and Berk had answered his previous prayer. Strapping the leg on Toothless' back, the Viking mounted the Night Fury and flew off in the direction of the shrine, the remaining Afflicted unaware of his departure.

It didn't take the two of them long to return to the shrine where Kesh waved at them.

"Kesh has kept the incense ready for your return, my friends. Kesh takes it that your quest was a success?"

Hiccup could only nodded as he dismounted Toothless and approached the vat. He inhaled deeply like before and once again, he was face to face with the pack of skeevers that was Peryite's aspect.

"I have done as you had commanded. Orchendor isâ€¦dead."

He was hesitant in that word, still trying to process on what exactly happened. The skeevers spoke.

"Well done, mortal. All things are in their order, and Orchendor roams the Pits. His betrayal will be punished, and your obedience is rewarded."

It was then that an object appeared out of nowhere in Hiccup's hands. It was a large shield much like his own, only it was curved outward and was made of a glassy material that shone in the sunlight. It was beautiful, but what exactly was this shield?

"This is my token: Spellbreaker. It will help aid you in many magical attacks as well as dragon Shouts. Not only will it defend you, but it will also repel all forms of magic back at their castor."

Hiccup remained silent at Peryite's words for a moment. This shield would defiantly come in handy in future battles, but it was clear that he could not do anything to improve it.

At leastâ€¦until he could learn how to enchant objects like what Renee had told him about earlier

"So, what happens now?" Hiccup asked, unsure if the Prince needed him anymore.

Peryite spoke.

"Go, seek your fate. I will be watching, and perhaps we will meet againâ€¦afterwards."

Hiccup gulped at what he meant.

"Very well. Good-bye."

"Embrace order and hard truth, mortal. Good bye." Peryite spoke before the incense left Hiccup's body once more.

Bidding Kesh farewell, Hiccup remounted Toothless and returned to Whiterun, where Rahm-Ku and J'Kiir were waiting for him outside the city walls. They practically demanded an explanation of Hiccup's long absence until they saw Spellbreaker. Having been caught by the Mage, the Rider told him about the three Princes he and the Thief met over the past couple of days.

Needless to say, the green Argonian's scales were never redder with anger.

* * *

><p>With Reneeâ€|

It had been hardly an hour since Renee discovered the secret of the Circle and, according to Farkas, they were close. While she kept her eyes on the surrounding area, Renee's mind was still struggling with the fact that she was in a crypt with a werewolf for a Shield-Brother. While the "demonstration" she had seen earlier was surprising if not frightening, Renee was amazed at how easily Farkas took on those bandits.

She shook out her thoughts as they entered the main chamber, which was obvious due to its sheer size. At the top of the stairs, past the many sarcophagi, was another Word Wall that Renee had seen at the barrow.

"It's too quiet." Farkas spoke as they walked up the steps.

Renee had to agree on that. No doubt Draugr would awake once they had the ax piece.

Once they reached the top of the stairs, Renee walked over to not to the ax piece, but the wall and its glowing word.

"What are you doing?" Farkas asked.

"Learning a new word." Renee muttered as she let the word sink into her mind.

_"Yol." _

That was what came into her mind as the word dimmed from the wall. Seeing this, Farkas spoke.

"So the rumors are true. You're one of the Dragonborn."

Renee turned her attention to Farkas with a surprised look on her face.

"You knew?"

Farkas nodded.

"Word had reached Jorrvaskr just shortly after you left for the temple job. A lot of people wanted to approach you upon your return, though the old man said to give you some time. I guess he doesn't want anyone to make an attempt to challenge one of the Dragonborn."

Renee's eyes widened as she heard this. The Companions knew she was Dragonborn all along?

"At least it'll be easy for me to ask for some time off once we get back." She managed to choke out.

"To see the Greybeards with the other three?" Farkas asked.

Renee nodded.

"We don't want to keep the Greybeards any longer than needed. I was planning to ask Kodlak for some time off when Aela told me that Skjor wanted to see me."

"Then let's hurry up and get out of here." Farkas replied as Renee took the blade piece.

And like clockwork, Draugr started coming to life and attacked them.

"Oh, come on!" Renee growled as she jumped into the fray.

She tried using the new word to fight, but got nothing. So she was forced to settle with `_**fus**_` as well as her sword and shield.

With every three the two warriors put down, three more rose up from "fresh" crypts. Unbeknownst to Renee, Farkas kept an eye on her as they fought. The girl had excellent skill and keen eyes, which was proven when she took off the head of a Draugr that was about to imbed his axe into the man's back. It was evident that the girl had great potential, not just as one of the Dragonborn, but as a member of the Companions.

It didn't take them long to clear the entire burial chamber of living Draugr before Renee, drenched in her own sweat, spoke to her Shield-Brother.

"Wellâ€¦ Shall we head back to Jorrvaskr?"

With a smirk, Farkas nodded as they headed back to the entrance.

* * *

><p>An hour laterâ€¦

Both Renee and Farkas managed to make it back before lunch and were eager to complete their task. But as they reached the stairs that lead to Jorrvaskr, they found Vilkas awaiting them at the top of the stairs.

"Well?" He asked Farkas.

Renee looked to her Shield-Brother and saw him smirk at his twin.

"She passed with flying colors."

Vilkas only nodded before motioning the two of them to follow. Only Farkas knew what his brother was thinking while Renee was left with

questions.

She followed the senior members around the back of Jorrvaskr and found Kodlak, Skjor, and Aela awaiting them.

"What's going on?" Renee asked Farkas.

"You'll see."

The twins gathered with the rest of the senior members as Renee stood opposite of Kodlak as the old man spoke.

"Brothers and sisters of the Circle, today we welcome a new soul into our mortal fold. This girl has endured, has challenged, and has shown her valor. Who will speak for her?"

Farkas then spoke up.

"I stand witness to the courage of the soul before us."

"Would you raise your shield in her defense?" Kodlak asked.

"I would stand at her back, that the world might never overtake us." Farkas responded.

"And would you raise your sword in her honor?"

"It stands ready to meet the blood of her foes."

"And would you raise a mug in her name?"

"I would lead the song of triumph as our mead hall reveled in her stories."

The Circle nodded as Kodlak spoke.

"Then the judgment of this Circle is complete. Her heart beats with fury and courage that have united the Companions since the days of the distant green summers. Let it beat with ours, that the mountains may echo and our enemies may tremble at the call."

All the members of the Circle then spoke.

"It shall be so."

It was then that the Circle dispersed, Aela and Farkas both congratulating Renee as they walked past her. This left her and Kodlak alone.

"Well, girl, you're one of us now. I trust you won't disappoint."

"I'll try not to." Renee replied.

She then asked for the time off, to which Kodlak agreed to. Like Farkas, he knew about her being Dragonborn and wanted her to prove herself before he could let her go. He then left before Renee could ask about the werewolf "blessing."

Her stomach growling, Renee stopped at the stalls to pick up some

meat before heading to Breezehome. But just as she purchased some venison and a basket of fish for Toothless, she heard her name being called.

It was Skjor.

"Before you run off, Aela and I want you to come to the Underforge tonight." Renee raised her eyebrow, but nodded. After all, it wouldn't take long.

Upon returning home, Renee found herself witnessing another hefty argument between J'Kiir and Rahm-Ku.

"I just can't leave you two alone, can I?" Renee asked, gaining the attention of the two men.

"Renee! You've come back!" Rahm-Ku spoke before glaring at J'Kiir again. "Guess what I've learned about our 'friends' excursions over the past couple of days."

* * *

><p>Later that nightâ€|

Needless to say, Renee was just as furious with the Viking and the Thief as Rahm-Ku was, only not as extreme as the Mage. While she wasn't happy that two of her fellow Dragonborn had been in contact with three of the Daedric Princes, she was proud of Hiccup for completing a challenge on his own. She didn't see much of him the rest of the day, having acquired a Centurion leg from the Dwemer ruins. She was glad to see he had taken her advice and started to create a leg based off the Centurion's leg, but had to pry him away for dinner, which she told the three that they are officially free to make the trek to High Hrothgar in the morning.

Once dinner was finished and the sun had set, Renee waited until the boys went to bed before she decided it was time to see what Skjor and Aela wanted. Grabbing her weapons, she left the house, the sound of the door being enough alert all three men.

"Where's she going?" Hiccup asked as the three looked out the door at a departing Renee.

"I'm not sure. She must be heading to Jorrvaskr." Rahm-Ku whispered.

J'Kiir looked to the two and spoke with a smirk.

"I say we follow her."

The two looked at the Khajiit, ready to argue, only to halt as they soon found themselves agreeing to the idea.

"If anything, we should make sure she's ok." Hiccup whispered to the Argonian.

While this was a time where Rahm-Ku would disagree outright, he had to agree with Hiccup on that point. With the journey to High Hrothgar in the morning, he would rather have all four Dragonborn present than having no explanation to the Greybeards as to why only three of the

four approached them.

"Alright, but keep quiet and out of sight as much as possible."

J'Kiir grinned.

"That's my specialty."

As the three followed in secret, Renee made her way back to Jorrvaskr. Upon reaching the mead hall, she wondered where exactly the Underforge was.

"Well, if it's some sort of forge, I guess it might be near the Skyforge."

She made her way to the Skyforge only to stop at the sight of Skjor waiting for her at the foot of the forge.

"Are you prepared?"

Renee gulped silently as she answered him.

"I'm ready for whatever task awaits."

Skjor gave a half-laugh as he answered her.

"This is no test, new blood. This is a gift. Come on."

He then lead Renee to the stone in front of them before pressing on a smaller stone, which to Renee's surprise, caused a large slab to sink into the ground. Curious, Renee followed her senior into the underground chamber, her three friends staying only by the gate of Jorrvaskr.

* * *

><p>As her eyes adjusted to the darkness, Renee was able to see that beneath the Skyforge was a circular chamber that was illuminated by the light of Masser and Secunda through two openings, each the size of a shield. To her right was another entryway and in front of her was a large, stone basin. And behind the basinâ€|was a werewolf.<p>

"We do this in secret because Kodlak is too busy trying to throw away this great gift we've been granted. He thinks we've been cursed. But we've been blessed. How can something that gives this kind of prowess be a curse? So we take matters into our own hands."

Renee didn't like where this was going, nervously keeping an eye on the werewolf.

"So what exactly are you talking about?"

Skjor answered her again.

"To reach the heights of the Companions, you must join with us in the shared blood of the wolf."

He then gestured to the werewolf.

"I wasn't surprised that you haven't recognized Aela in this form. She's agreed to be your forbearer."

Renee gaped at Skjor.

"Wait a minute. Are you sayingâ€|thatâ€|?"

Skjor nodded.

"You have proven yourself well today, new blood. After Farkas gave the report of what you did in the cairn, we've agreed that you have earned the right to become a member of the Circle. Hence, the rendezvous."

"But I've just officially joined the Companions today. I should be far from ever achieving such an honor."

Renee was hesitant when she said "honor." Was this honorable?

"None the less, you have far more experience than anyone here in the Companions. Having been raised by the Sabre Fangs, you have the skills that are close enough to give you such an honor. So don't waste this." Skjor replied rather harshly.

Renee held her tongue.

"Now, are there any more questions? Or are you prepared to join your spirit with the beast world, young one?" asked Skjor.

Renee was hesitant. On one hand, this was against what she had been taught. But on the other hand, if she had that kind of power, she could use it to help other people. Make her stronger than she was at that moment.

She went over dilemma after dilemma in her head, although it didn't help that she had a very cold Nord and a werewolf glaring down at her. She could refuse, but she would dishonor herself. And for a Nord, honor meant everything. But could she control the blood in a short amount of time?

But before her mind could settle, her mouth once again blurted out.

"I'm ready."

Skjor only gave a nod of approval as he walked over to Aela, his sword drawn. Wolf-Aela lifted her arm over the basin and with swiftness and precision, Skjor created a large gash on the wolf's arm. It wasn't large enough to cause a problem, but it was big enough to create a small pool of blood in the basin, just enough to cover the bottom of the large bowl.

As he tended Aela's arm, Skjor gestured to the basin and spoke one word.

"Drink."

Renee gave another gulp as she mentally cursed her mouth. With her hand shaking, she reached into the basin and cupped some of the

blood.

"Let's get this over with."

With one swift move, she drank the blood.

That's when it began.

Once the blood reached the pit of her stomach, a sharp pain made itself known in her gullet. The pain was so intense, she was forced to curl up on her side in a fetal position. The pain grew worse as the pain moved from her stomach and into the rest of her body. She could feel the beast blood spear into her bloodstream and with each heartbeat, a part of her body started to tingle.

Not with a numbing feeling, but like a thousand needles poking her simultaneously and slowly as she felt fur bursting from every pore on her skin. She soon began to hear her bones crack and restore at a rapid pace. With each crack, her body grew longer and larger.

Finally, she let out a blood-curdling scream which evolved into a howl.

* * *

><p>With the boysâ€|

Upon hearing the howl, the hair on the back of the boys' necks rose. Well, scales in Rahm-Ku's case.

"What in Oblivion was that?!"

"I don't know. But I think we're about to find out." Hiccup pointed to the opening to the Underforge.

Any words they had to say were quickly forced still in their throats as a large figure skulked out of the Underforge. Even though this was their first time seeing such a thing, all three knew exactly what the creature was.

"Dear gods." Rahm-Ku whispered.

Suddenly, the werewolf gave a loud growl before it ran to the top of the Skyforge and jumped over the walls of Whiterun. The three ducked as Skjor and Aela ran from the Underforge and out of the city. Once the two Companions were gone, the Dragonborn left their hiding place and stood on the steps of Jorrvaskr.

"What in Oblivion is going on? What was that?" J'Kiir spoke, his eyes widened.

"That's what I wanna know." Said Hiccup.

Suddenly, a new voice sighed.

"I told those two she wasn't ready for it yet."

The three boys turned to find themselves facing an old man dressed in armor standing out of one of the doors to the mead hall.

"I take it you boys are Renee's friends?" the man asked.

The three slowly nodded, earning another sigh from the old man.

"Renee will be fine, but it seems I must divulge the secret to help you understand what is going on."

* * *

><p>Back with Reneeâ€|

After her little "blackout," Renee was finally able to regain her consciousness. She also found herself freezing cold.

"Wha-what happened?"

A familiar voice spoke to her as the familiar heat of a torch reached the Nord.

"I see you're awake. I was starting to think you might never come back."

Renee's eyes adjusted to the light as she was able to focus in on the voice's figure.

It was Aela.

The Companion then tossed a bag at her feet along with a new sword.

"You might want to get dressed. It's pretty chilly tonight."

Renee looked at herself as she took the bag, only to gape in embarrassment as she found that she was in the buff.

As she quickly dressed, Aela spoke to the young Warrior.

"Yours was not an easy transformation. But you're still alive, so congratulations. We even have a celebration planned for you."

Renee raised an eyebrow as she spoke.

"Celebration?"

Aela nodded.

"There's a pack of werewolf hunters camped nearby, at Gallows Rock."

"Werewolf hunters?" Renee asked again.

Once more, Aela nodded.

"The Silver Hand. I think you've met them before in Dustman's Cairn. We're going to slaughter them. All of them."

She then gestured to the ruined fortress past the brush.

"Lead on. Skjor's already scouting ahead."

Now donning a set of leather armor and a new sword, Renee began to walk as she continued to ask her questions.

"So, what exactly happened to me?"

"You were born into the pack, sister. I almost envy you. That first time is always the most intense. You gave us even more trouble than Farkas did at his first turning." Replied Aela.

"Huh." Renee simply spoke.

* * *

><p>Upon entering the fortress, the two werewolves were met with an ugly sight: werewolf heads on pikes. Aela snarled.<p>

"Look at this. Cowards must have locked the place down after Skjor charged in. You can taste the fear."

Renee just kept silent, the only thing she was tasting was the blood in the air.

With each chamber they passed, they not only came across multiple Silver Hand, but corpses of other werewolves, thankfully none of them were anyone the Companions knew. However, Renee was liking this "celebration" less and less. As they got deeper, Aela spoke up after nothing but silence and grunts.

"We're getting close now. Be careful. Their leader is a tricky one. They call him 'the Skinner.' Don't need to tell you why."

This didn't calm Renee, but she kept silent as they entered the lowest chamber. It was clear that this was the main chamber of the Silver Hand of Gallows Rock as three Silver Hands saw the two Companions and attacked. Renee made quick work of one of the Silver Hand just as soon as she found herself fighting against the strongest of the three, whom she figured was the Skinner. Fortunately, he was easily taken down when Aela shot an arrow into his back, allowing Renee the chance to skewer him in the gullet.

Once the fight settled, the two took a look around the room, only to freeze at the sight of Skjor, lying dead on the ground. Aela snarled.

"Those bastards somehow they managed to kill Skjor."

She stood tall, her fists shaking with anger.

"He was one of the strongest we had, but numbers can overwhelm. He should not have come without a Shield-Brother."

She then turned to Renee.

"Get out of here. I'm going to make sure we got the last of them, and see if there's any information to be gotten from the bodies. Besides, you're leaving for High Hrothgar tomorrow, right? You should get some sleep. I'll send a courier once I've got something."

She then looked to Skjor's corpse.

"The Silver Hand will tremble at our sight."

* * *

><p>It took a couple of hours before Renee made it back to Whiterun and she was exhausted. First, she had to find a landmark, which was a city towards the rising moons. She walked towards the city until she found a signpost. The city she found was Windhelm, which meant she was in the hold of Eastmarch east of Whiterun. Following the path, Renee managed to make it home before midnight.<p>

But as she entered the house, she found herself face-to-face with Rahm-Ku, Hiccup, and J'Kiir.

"Everything ok?" Renee asked.

Folding his arms, Hiccup spoke.

"We were wondering the same thing."

Rahm-Ku then spoke.

"We know you've just become a werewolf, Renee."

Renee tensed up. How did they know about that? She got her answer when J'Kiir spoke.

"We were wondering where you were going and followed you to Jorrvaskr. We saw you go in with two others and those two came out right after a werewolf left from the same entrance."

Renee gulped. Now what?

To her surprise, Rahm-Ku just patted her on the shoulder as he spoke.

"Your secret's safe with us. Kodlak told us what was going on. Now get to bed. We'll leave mid-morning."

Renee was silent for a moment, but nodded as she trudge up to bed. The boys followed suit as it was going to be a big day in the morning.

The mystery of the Dragonborn will finally be solved.

* * *

><p>Sorry again for the super-long wait everyone, but now in the next chapter, not only will Hiccup and the gang reach High Hrothgar and learn about what it means to be Dragonborn, but they will discover that the four of them are closer than they think.

_Please review. _

****Chapter 12****

****The Way of the Voice****

_Phew! Took me a while, but I've finished the next chapter. And on the right day, too. At 7:00, I'm gonna go and see HTTYD 2 in 3D.

—

Also, I've forgotten to mention this in the last chapter. I've managed to get the Legendary Edition of Skyrim and now I can add 'Dragonborn' and "Dawnguard" into the fic. Still debating about 'Hearthfire' though.

* * *

><p>It was mid-morning the next day and as promised, the Dragonborn were getting ready to leave. Rahm-Ku left Lydia instructions to mind Breezehome while they were gone and to send a courier in case there was an emergency. At Renee's advice, Hiccup and J'Kiir locked their Daedric artifacts in a chest and hid the chest in the house. By far, Lydia had no clue of what the boys had come across and the Dragonborn prefer to keep it that way. Aela had also returned that morning with Skjor's body, but only she and Renee knew what will go on in the future.<p>

Each of the Dragonborn prepared themselves for that day. After cleaning it, Renee wore her leather armor that she received the night before. She decided to just bring a steel sword and a hide shield. She wanted to travel light, but did make sure she was well armed.

Rahm-Ku decided to wear the mage's robes he received from Farengar the day he and his companions discovered they were Dragonborn and some boots. He had finished reading the majority of the books he had received from the court wizard and was only bringing one of the Altercation books and one of the Illusion books with him. He also had a book for a basic Flame spell and a Lesser Ward book for Hiccup during their trip. He had made sure after his outburst to finish teaching Hiccup the local language the previous day so he could heal himself. Although Hiccup had yet to know how to access his own magicka reserves, prompting the Argonian Mage to teach him how to on the way.

J'Kiir was dressed in his own fashion of leather armor, the Elven bow on his back along with a full quiver of steel arrows. He also made sure that Toothless' saddlebags were empty save for the essential supplies. He also made a quick trip to the general store to sell the items he acquired since Helgen and adding more coin to the group money satchel.

Hiccup was also given some fresh clothing for the day. He discarded the Imperial armor he had been wearing for the past few days and settled for a green tunic and dark pants. He had to buy a complete pair of boots but only was able to wear only one. It was J'Kiir's suggestion that he'd use the remaining boot as storage, but he decided to just leave it behind.

As Hiccup saddled Toothless and the others placing the necessities into the saddlebags, J'Kiir whispered to his fellow Dragonborn.

"Don't look now, but we've got some spectators."

Sure enough, upon careful gazing from the others, the Dragonborn and the Night Fury could see the townspeople cast curious glances at the five.

It wasn't the first time that they had been given such glances, mostly by curious children or fretful adults. It took a couple of days before the local gossip chain told them about what the five of them did at the watchtower and that the four teenagers were Dragonborn. Of course, there were some interactions between the local heroes and the people when the former did various jobs, but other than that, the people kept their distance.

Now that the five of them were finally leaving for High Hrothgar, the domain of the Greybeards, the townspeople couldn't help but get a final look at the Dragonborn and their trained dragon.

"Let's just finish up. The sooner we get to High Hrothgar, the better." Rahm-Ku whispered.

The rest of them nodded as Hiccup took out the map of Skyrim from one of the saddlebags.

"So why did you want me to bring out the map, Renee?" He asked.

Renee approached him as he placed the map on a covered barrel.

"You say Toothless can fly us to High Hrothgar, right?"

"Right?" Hiccup asked.

"But here's the thing. We want to show our respect to the Greybeards and I think the best thing we should do is climb the 7,000 steps."

The boys gaped at her.

_"What!?" _

Renee sighed as she pointed to a spot on the map.

"We can do it once, alright? Climbing the steps will show our respect, which is what we need to do if we're gonna get any answers. So we canâ€¦flyâ€¦to Ivarstead here in the Rift and walk from there."

"Why Ivarstead?" Rahm-Ku asked.

"Because that's where the steps begin." Renee answered him.

Looking at the map, J'Kiir spoke. "At least it won't take us a few hours to get to Ivarstead. Although it may take us sometime to walk up the steps. I should say it will be at least two hours by the time we make it up there at a good pace."

None of the boys said anything else about the hesitance in Renee's voice. After becoming a werewolf the previous night, the three

decided to let her take it easy for a while. Thus, Hiccup voiced that the Dragonborn should fly up to High Hrothgar on Toothless than walk, not wanting to cause Renee to 'go wolf' in impatience. A look from J'Kiir's eyes told the Rider and the Mage that it would be best to do as Renee explained.

With the supplies set, Hiccup got on the new saddle he crafted the other day in between examinations of the Centurion leg he got from Bthardamz. Following him were Rahm-Ku, Renee, and J'Kiir. "Hang on, guys." Hiccup announced, causing the Dragonborn to grab on to the one in front of them while Hiccup held a grip on the saddle.

"Alright, Toothless. Let's go!"

With a jump, Toothless obeyed his rider and took off, leaving a bewildered Whiterun behind.

As they flew southward, J'Kiir gave directions.

"Ok. Remember Haemar's Shame, Hiccup?"

"Yeah?" he asked.

J'Kiir continued. "Follow the stone path from their and we should reach Ivarstead in no time."

Rahm-Ku then spoke up in a strained voice. "Renee. Could you loosen your grip please? I can hardly breathe."

Both Viking and Khajiit looked to the pair and indeed found Renee's strong arms wrapped around the Argonian's waist tightly, her eyes closed not of the wind, but of fear.

"Sorry about that. But I won't let go until we are safely on the ground."

J'Kiir gave a laugh.

"Who knew that the strongest among us is afraid of flying?"

Turning her head to the Thief, the Warrior snarled.

"Easy for you to say! You're not the heaviest amongst us! One wrong move and one of us drops like a rock!"

"Don't worry about it, Renee. If you fall, Toothless and I can catch you." Hiccup spoke.

J'Kiir held his tongue while Rahm-Ku found himself able to breathe again as Renee loosen her grip.

"You better. Or my ghost will come back to haunt you."

The quartet remained silent as Toothless followed the trail around the mountain, the land of Falkreath vanishing at the pass and the Rift coming towards them. Upon passing the pass, Hiccup was finally able to see what the Rift looked like properly, since the last time he was here he was unconscious and carted off to his execution. Despite it being towards the end of summer, autumn had defiantly come in the Rift. Birch trees covered the landscape in a sea of white bark

and golden leaves. There were other kinds of trees, too. But the birch was far more prosperous. From their position in the sky, the Viking could see rivers and a lake towards the east.

Complete with the clear blue sky, the Rift was just as magnificent as Falkreath.

"Just another mile until we reach Ivarstead. We should land around here." Rahm-Ku's voice snapped Hiccup out of his thoughts and back to the present as he proceeded to land.

"Sorry about that, guys. I couldn't help but admire the view."

Upon landing, the first to hop off of Toothless was Renee, who was happy to be on the ground.

"Thank the Divines!"

Hearing her, Hiccup patted a disgruntled Toothless on the head.

"Don't worry about it, bud. She'll come around."

The five then looked to the ledge above them.

"I think the Greybeards will understand if Toothless misses a few yards of stairs, right?" J'Kiir asked.

Getting the hint, Hiccup motioned Toothless to climb up to the stairs a few yards above and for him to wait until the four of them catch up.

It was an easy walk from their location to Ivarstead. They did look around as they walked for any dangerous wildlife and the possibility of more enemy dragons flying about as well as keeping an eye on Renee. They reached Ivarstead in a matter of minutes and were one step closer to their answers.

"Only 7,000 steps to go." Hiccup joked.

"And then some." J'Kiir added.

It got them a good laugh out of the group, much to their relief.

Passing the small hamlet, they found the steps across the second bridge since the town came to their second destination. The villagers gave them odd looks, but shrugged them off as word of what happened at Whiterun had yet to arrive. This was a relief to the four Dragonborn as they started their way up the steps.

But as they walked several steps, they spotted something not too far off the path: a small shrine with an inscription on it. Renee was the one who read it aloud while the others, save for Hiccup, read along.

"Before the birth of men, the Dragons ruled all Mundus. Their word was the Voice, and they spoke only for True Needs. For the Voice could blot out the sky and flood the land."

"Any idea what that means?" Rahm-Ku asked the Nord, who shook her head in response.

"Not much. I think I heard something like this when I was little, but I don't remember."

"Think maybe the Greybeards know?" Hiccup asked.

They all just shrugged their shoulders as Rahm-Ku took out a blank book and wrote down the etching.

"Possibly. But there might be more as we go up." Answered the newborn werewolf.

Sure enough, after about a half mile upwards, a second tablet was sitting there with a hunter leaving it. He nodded to the teenagers as they approached the tablet. Rahm-Ku read it aloud.

"_Men were born and spread over the face of Mundus. The Dragons presided over the crawling masses. Men were weak then, and had no Voice.'_ I guess these must be some sort of timeline about how the Thu'um came to be."

They met up with Toothless at the third etching farther up the trail, which J'Kiir took a crack at reading.

"_The fledgling spirits of Men were strong in Old Times. Unafraid to war with Dragons and their Voices. But the Dragons only shouted them down and broke their hearts.'_ Looks like mortals rebelled with the dragons, but they proved to be too much."

Renee then looked to Hiccup as five of them continued to walk up the steps.

"I wonder why your dragons don't Shout like the ones we've been facing since we first met."

Hiccup looked at Toothless and patted him on the head.

"I don't know. But if the dragons here could use their Thu'um to force men to submit to them, I'm glad they didn't reach Berk along with our own dragons."

"But who says they hadn't?" J'Kiir asked rather ominously as they continued.

They found another traveler praying at another etching about a few miles upwards. By then, the air was getting pretty thin and the quintet were forced to reduce their pace as they struggle to keep a steady air supply. Renee read the etching aloud.

"_Kyne called on Paarthurnax, who pitied Man. Together they taught Men to use the Voice. Then Dragon War raged, Dragon against Tongue.'_"_

They kept their silence, not wanting to bother the other woman, the five just walked on, making sure Toothless wasn't seen by the pilgrim. But as they reached a ravine after they continued walking, they found their trail blocked by an unwelcomed creature. It was white as snow and looked like a mad ape. There was only one thing

that came to Hiccup's mind when he saw this multi-eyed creature.

"Frost Giant?"

Renee answered as she jumped into the fray with Rahm-Ku casting a flame spell on the attacking creature.

"Frost Troll!"

Toothless growled as the pair took out the Frost Troll. J'Kiir didn't even need to fight as the combination of sword and magic defeated the troll in a matter of minutes. J'Kiir then got to work harvesting something from the troll.

"Gods, J'Kiir! What are you collecting this time?" Hiccup protested.

J'Kiir answered him as he continued to scrap a gelatinous substance from the creature and placing it into an empty container.

"Troll fat has multiple properties, such as being able to resist poison. However, if mixed wrong, it could cause hallucinations and even deteriorate one's health. Thankfully, all trolls are weak against fire."

After J'Kiir collected the sample and they continued on, Hiccup whispered to Toothless.

"Looks like there's more than just native difference between us and Tamriel, eh bud?"

They found more etchings as they continued on, each on the Tamrielans translated for Hiccup and Toothless.

_"Man prevailed, shouting Alduin out of the world. Proving for all that their Voice too was strong. Although their sacrifices were many-fold." _Spoke Rahm-Ku.

Hiccup's eyes widened at the word 'Alduin.'

"Guys. Why do I get the feeling that word's important?"

"You're not the only one. My fur bristled at the sound of that name." J'Kiir spoke, smoothing his exposed fur out.

The Khajiit read the next etching as they came to it.

_"With roaring Tongues, the Sky-Children conquer. Founding the First Empire with Sword and Voice. Whilst the Dragons withdrew from this World." _

Renee read again as she found another etching.

_ "The Tongues at Red Mountain went away humbled. Jorgen Windcaller began His Seven Year Meditation. To understand how Strong Voices could fail." _

Then Rahm-Ku once more.

"Jurgen Windcaller chose silence and returned. The 17 disputants could not shout Him down. Jurgen the Calm built His home on the Throat of the World."

They then came across a statue of Talos just as they could see the monastery around the corner. J'Kiir was the one who read the etching.

"For years all silent, the Greybeards spoke one name. Tiber Septim, stripling then, was summoned to Hrothgar. They blessed and named him Dovahkiin."

Hearing that last one, Hiccup turned to Renee and spoke.

"Didn't those guards back in Whiterun mentioned something about a Tiber Septim when we discovered we were Dragonborn?"

Rahm-Ku nodded as he answered.

"Tiber Septim, or Talos as he was originally called, was the first of the Septim Dynasty of emperors. I did a bit of research and apparently, he was what we are. Although the concept of Dragonborn still draws me a blank."

The quintet reached one last etching right in front of the monastery as Hiccup spoke before Renee could read.

"Let me read it this time."

The trio of natives looked to Hiccup with confusion before Rahm-Ku spoke.

"You sure about that? You're still learning the language."

Hiccup held up a blank book of his own, a suggestion given to him by the Mage before the left Whiterun.

"I think I can do this."

The three looked at each other before giving the Viking a supporting nod. He then looked to the etching, using his book as a cheat sheet, then read aloud.

"The Voice is worship. Follow the Inner path. Speak only in True Need."

J'Kiir looked at the etching and nodded.

"He got it right."

The remainder sighed in relief as Rahm-Ku spoke.

"I guess I can teach you how to use magic, now."

But before Hiccup could speak, Toothless walked to the doors of High Hrothgar and sniffed. Catching a calm scent, he motioned to his Rider and their new friends to the door.

"Think they're expecting us, Toothless?" asked Renee.

The Night Fury pushed open the door, indicating to the four that Renee's assumption was right. Without another word, they followed the dragon into the monastery.

* * *

><p>The dim monastery at least provided shelter from cold wind but did little for the thin air. The grey stone structure reminded Hiccup of the Great Hall back on Berk, minus the Vikings and the tannish coloring. He and the others followed the Night Fury into the center of the monastery, where it was the brightest. Standing before them were four elderly men dressed in grey, hooded robes. One of the men, who was distinguishable by the knot in his beard, approached the five and spoke.<p>

"Soâ€|four Dragonborn appears, at this moment in the turning of the age."

Renee was the first to speak, bowing slightly to the man.

"We are answering your summons."

The elder raised an eyebrow before he continued.

"We will see if you truly have the gift. Show us, Dragonborn. Let us taste of your Voices."

The four looked at each other before lining up. One by one, the Dragonborn shouted **_**fus**_**, making sure their aim was away from them. Seeing the force leave each one and away from them, the elders widened their eyes faintly. The elder that spoke did so once again.

"Dragonborn. It is you. Welcome to High Hrothgar."

He then approached the four of them.

"I am Master Arngeir. I speak for the Greybeards."

One by one, the Dragonborn bowed to the Greybeards.

"We are honored, master. I am Renee of Skyrim."

"I am called Rahm-Ku of Black Marsh."

"I am named J'Kiir. Born in Elsweyr."

"And I am Hiccup, I'm from the northern island of Berk. And the dragon with me is my best friend, Toothless."

To the other Dragonborn's surprise, Toothless also bowed in respect of the human elders.

"Could it be possibleâ€|that Toothless knew about the Greybeards long before?" Renee thought in suspicion.

Acknowledging the five, surprising them even further that the Greybeards were neither surprised nor freighted, Arngeir spoke.

"Now tell me, Dragonborn, why have you come here?"

But before Renee could answer respectively, J'Kiir beat her to it.

"As Renee has stated, we are here to answer your summons, master. But if I may be so bold as to ask, what does it mean to be Dragonborn?"

Arngeir answered the student.

"We are here to guide you four in that pursuit, just as the Greybeards have sought to guide those of the Dragon Blood that came before you."

This caught interest to the non-Nords, Hiccup speaking out.

"You meanâ€¦we're not the only ones?"

Arngeir shook his head.

"None of you are the first. There have been many of the Dragon Blood since Akatosh first bestowed that gift upon mortalkind. Whether you are the only Dragonborn of this ageâ€¦that is not ours to know. You are the only ones that have been revealed thus far. However, at such a fact that four Dragonborn were born and found simultaneouslyâ€¦that is an extremely rare occurrence. Perhaps, you are the first in that knowledge."

The four remained silent in surprise. Was what the Tamriel Trio had heard upon their return to Whiterun true? Could the emergence of four Dragonborn mean a great disaster is upon them? They remained silent as Arngeir spoke up.

"We are indeed honored to welcome four Dragonborn to High Hrothgar. We will do our best to teach you how to use your gifts in fulfillment of your destinies."

"What are our destinies?" Rahm-Ku asked.

"That is for you to discover. We can show you and your siblings the Way, but not your destination." Arngeir spoke.

However, one part in the sentence caught the Dragonborn's ears.

"Siblings, master? What do you mean?" Renee asked.

Arngeir answered her, gesturing to Toothless first.

"The dragons that preceded your friend's ancestors were born of Akatosh. Those dragons were sons of Akatosh and brothers of their fellow dragons. To have the Dragons Blood in your veins makes you a sibling of not only these dragons, but of your fellow Dragonborn as well. So despite being born to different families and of different races, all of you are blood-related siblings."

That was a slap in the face for all of the Dragonborn, even Toothless was stunned at this revelation. Looking at the Tamriel Trio with the knowledge he had received, Hiccup made the connection as to why he felt so comfortable amongst the three.

They were his brothers and sister.

But, then what does that make Toothless and all of the Northern dragons? Siblings? Cousins? That would be another question that Hiccup would have to look hard in finding the answer to. His questions would have to hold as Arngeir spoke on.

"All of you have shown that you are all Dragonborn. You have the inborn gift. But do any of you have the discipline and temperament to follow the paths laid out for you? That remains to be seen. Now. Shall we begin?"

The four paused and looked at each other for a moment before giving a nod.

Thus, the Greybeards began the lesson with Arngeir speaking.

"Without training, you have already taken the first steps towards projecting your Voices into _Thu'um_, or Shouts. Now let us see if any of you are willing and able to learn. When you Shout, you speak in the language of dragons. Thus, your Dragon Blood gives you an inborn ability to learn new Words of Power.

"All Shouts are made up of three Words of Power. As you master each word, your Shouts will become progressively stronger. Master Einarth will now teach you four '_**Ro**_', the second word in the Shout you have demonstrated for us: _Unrelenting Force_. '_**Ro**_' means 'Balance' in the dragon tongue. Combine it with '_**Fus, ' **_'Force,' to focus your Thu'um more sharply."

It was then that Einarth whispered the word towards the ground in front of them. To the Dragonborn's amazement, the word, though in the dragon language, glowed on the floor. Like before, the quartet gazed upon the word, letting it engrave into their minds. Little did the four of them know that their irises glowed as they learned the word. Once the word on the floor faded.

This action didn't go unnoticed by the Greybeards.

"You learn a new word like mastersâ€|you truly have the gift." Arngeir spoke.

"But learning a Word of Power is only the first stepâ€| you must unlock its meaning through constant practice in order to use it in a Shout."

The four were about to gape in shock until Arngeir spoke again.

"Well, that is how the rest of us learn Shouts. As Dragonborn, you can absorb as slain dragon's life force and knowledge directly. As part of your initiation, Master Einarth will allow you to tap into his understanding of '_**'Ro.'**_'"

At that, Einarth gave a light bow and, to the four's surprise, the same ethereal threads that enabled them to learn the words they found flowed from the elder and surrounded the quartet. It wasn't long before '_**Ro**_' was unlocked for them.

"Now let us see how quickly you can master your new Thu'um." Arngeir instructed.

Motioning the four to a spot across from where they originally stood, he continued to teach.

"Use your _Unrelenting Force _shout to strike at the targets as they appear. First, Renee."

As she got into position, Renee waited as the others watched from the side. Although while she waited, her attention turned to the three boys she traveled with. After years of being a Sabre Fang-raised orphan, she finds out on this particular day that she, in fact, had three brothers. Three _odd_ brothers, sure, but brothers none the less. She snapped out of her stupor as one of the Greybeards shouted at the center of the diamond pattern on the floor.

"_**Fiikâ€|Loâ€|Suh!"**_"

It was then that an ethereal image of the castor appeared in front of her. Getting the hint, Renee tested her Voice.

"_**"Fusâ€|Ro!" **_"

The sudden force was stronger when she just used _**fus**_, so she had to brace herself for the boomerang effect that followed. Arngeir nodded and motioned Rahm-Ku forward.

"Very good. Your turn, Rahm-Ku."

Rahm-Ku nodded and followed Renee's lead. Like before, he practiced Shout when a specter appeared. Once he was done, J'Kiir was up, then Hiccup, although it was difficult for him to brace himself with the prosthetic leg.

* * *

><p>After each of them tried the new word once, the Greybeards allowed them to practice out in the courtyard behind the monastery for the rest of the day and they would learn the next lesson the following day. This gave the four of them the time to talk to each other in between turns.<p>

"So. What a day, huh?" Hiccup asked.

"You got that right." Renee spoke. "I'm more stuck on the fact that you guys are my brothers."

"You're not the only one, Renee. I think that is the only thing that's been nagging at me more than the rest of the questions I have." J'Kiir added in as he got up to bat."

"And I'm already adapted to have four sisters. I wasn't expecting to have one more and three brothers out in the world." Rahm-Ku spoke as he sat down on the monastery steps with his newly found siblings.

Hiccup laughed as Toothless chased the target baskets that the

Greybeards allowed them to practice on.

"If only you guys were in Berk three years ago. My dad would'veâ€¦"

But his words trailed off as he remembered something from that time.

Noting the pause, the Tamriel Trio looked to their new brother.

"Everything ok, Hiccup?"

But Hiccup didn't say anything. What was flashing in his mind right now was his battle with the Red Death, more importantly, the moment he blacked out.

"I just remembered something. When Toothless and I took out the Red Death three years ago, I saw something before I blacked out. I thought it was just my imagination at first, but with what's been happening the past few days, I think I know what happened."

"And what's that?" J'Kiir asked.

Hiccup answered.

"Before I passed out, I thought I saw flames coming from where the Red Death crashed and surround me. But now that I think about it, I think I absorbed her soul instead."

That got the Trio's attention.

"You absorbed her soul?" Renee asked in shock.

Hiccup shrugged his shoulders.

"I think so. I'll have to ask Master Arngeir or one of the others on how I can tell if I absorbed a dragon's soul or not."

The four pondered for a while until Toothless decided to intervene by picking up a basket with his mouth and tossed it onto Hiccup's head. This earned a hearty laugh from the Viking's siblings. He smirked at his Night Fury as he took off the basket.

"Oh, you still wanna play, huh?"

Toothless wagged his tail eagerly in response, earning more laughter from his rider's siblings.

A grin forming, Hiccup tossed Renee the basket.

"Renee!"

Renee got the idea and caught the basket before tossing it in front of Hiccup, who released the Shout that propelled the basket a good distance, allowing the humans, the Argonian, and the Khajiit to watch as the Night Fury chased after the basket like a dog with a stick.

Renee laughed as Toothless handed her the basket.

"Alright, my turn."

The Dragonborn spent much of the day using practicing their Thu'um by playing fetch with a cow-sized black dragon.

* * *

><p>Phew! Finally. Now I can allow my brain to go to Oddworld without coming back this. Happy HTTYD2 Day!

13. Final Tests

****Chapter 13****

****Final Tests****

Finally! After nearly a year of traveling the universes, I have returned to "Dragonborn Four!" I used an actual recipe for Apple Cabbage Stew below, so basically you can cook with this fic.

I do not own How to Train Your Dragon or The Elder Scrolls.

* * *

><p>Hiccup awoke to a new day and as a new man. After all that training with the unfinished Unrelenting Force shout, he never felt so happy to curl up in his bedroll. He remembered all that happened the previous day, in particular the fact that his traveling companions; Renee, Rahm-Ku, and J'Kiir; were in fact his siblings by the dragon blood in their veins. Even after discussing it with them, it was an amazing discovery all together.

He looked to find Toothless starting to stir beside him. In front of him were Rahm-Ku and J'Kiir, fast asleep, although it wasn't so surprising with his Argonian brother. The Mage took up most of the night asking so many questions to Master Arngeir that both the Viking and the Khajiit had to pry him away in order to give the Greybeard some sleep. Never before had Hiccup seen a more enthusiastic scholar other than Fishlegs back on Berk that he had to have a private laugh to get it out of his system.

J'Kiir hardly did anything unusual other than work on potions and counting the coin. Eventually, the Khajiit grew bored enough that he had begun to count the hairs on his body before falling asleep.

There was only one person missing from their little group and that was Renee. Knowing her, she most likely got up early to practice her combat skills outside the monastery. The only other possible option was that she had gone out hunting game to keep her werewolf blood under control. Perhaps once they have a chance to get away, they should return to Whiterun and have Renee return to the Companions for counsel.

But for now, it was time for the Viking to get up.

Upon standing, he made his way to the kitchen as quietly as he could and began breakfast. This particular morning he decided to make a

stew that Renee was telling him about the previous day that had apples and cabbages for ingredients. He never heard of having apples in a stew, so hopefully he would get the recipe right.

After juicing about four cups of juice from some apples, Hiccup opened a sealed container of salt-cured cabbage that stank to high Asgard. After ridding the cabbage juice, he placed the cabbage in the pot. He then took a small knife and cut up three apples into little bite-sized chunks and added them to the pot.

Once that was done, he let the stew simmer for a few hours. Thankfully, he was early enough to make the stew without a couple of fussy brothers who would complain if they didn't have anything to eat. While he waited and stirred the stew, Hiccup ate some of the bread that was packed with them and once it had been about four hours, continued to cook.

He then diced up one last apple and added to the stew and waited another 30 minutes before he added a pinch of salt to taste. He took a chance and tried a spoonful of the stew and found it pretty tasty. It had a sweet and sour flavor to it and the Viking found it better than what he'd normally eat on Berk.

"Note to self: thank Renee for the recipe."

As he ate the stew, he spotted Rahm-Ku and J'Kiir coming from their sleeping spots and joining him.

"That smells good." Rahm-Ku gasped in delight as he poured himself a bowl.

"I'll say." J'Kiir agreed as he got himself a bowl.

Sitting across from his brothers, J'Kiir noticed someone missing.

"Where's our sister?"

The Viking shrugged his shoulders as he voiced his thoughts on the location of their sister.

"She's either training or hunting. We may have to stop at Whiterun once we are done here."

The Thief and the Mage looked at each other with knowing glances before returning to their meal.

Just then, a snow-covered Renee entered the kitchen, her stomach growling loud enough for the trio of brothers to hear.

"Well, that leaves out the wolf's blood." J'Kiir muttered as he ate.

The Nord set her sword and shield down as she in turn took an empty bowl and began to serve herself.

"Thank the Divines. I walked all the way down to Ivarstead, investigated their local barrow, and had to hike back up with what I had collected down there during a storm."

This caught the brothers by surprise.

"How early did you wake?" Hiccup asked. "I've worked on this stew for four hours."

Renee ate a couple of spoonfuls of stew before she answered.

"I hardly got any sleep last night. I'mâ€|twitchy as of late. Took that 'walk' an hour after midnight to see if that would help."

"And it didn't?" Rahm-Ku asked.

Renee shook her head.

"The only thing it did for me was made me hungrier. And I have already used my wolf's blood on a couple of dragons and a stray mammoth."

The word 'dragons' caught the boys' attention.

"You fought a couple of dragons? On your own?" J'Kiir asked, not paying attention to the stew that was falling out of his gaping maw.

Renee took another bowl of stew as she answered.

"There was a word wall down by the hot springs. Map said it was called 'Bonestrewn Crest.' Practically next door to the Eldergleam Sanctuary."

She then pulled something out of her pocket.

"Here. I read and unlocked this word. It is _**'Fo.'**_ Tested it out and found that it is some sort of frost breath."

She then pulled out a larger paper and handed it to Rahm-Ku.

"Figured you'd want to see this. It's a rubbing of the Dragon Script. I also circled _**Fo**_ in there."

Rahm-Ku nodded and took the rolled-up parchment before setting it aside as Renee went for a third helping. Seeing this, Hiccup spoke up, hoping to do some good for their sister.

"Uh, Renee? Don't you think that's enough? You said you had a mammoth, right."

Seeing this, Renee placed a hand to her face and rubbed her eyes.

"You're right. I should be full by now. I ate a full grown mammoth," she paused to gesture to her northern brother. "â€|that's about as big as a house."

The trio nearly choked on their stew when she said that. Rahm-Ku looked to the Nord and spoke.

"Ok. When we are done here, we are _definitely _making a trip back to Whiterun."

Renee waved a hand and spoke.

"Aela said I would have a gigantic appetite for a couple of days. If I just keep my eating under control, it should go back to normal."

The three didn't buy it but agreed that they should get Renee back to Whiterun after the lessons were over.

After the four had finished eating and Hiccup fed Toothless a basket of fish Renee provided, the pair waited in the courtyard as instructed from the previous night. At the end of the day, Arngeir told the four to wait for the Greybeards outside. They kept warm with the aid of Renee's fire Shout as they waited. They stood at attention once they heard the stone and steel doors open.

Greeting the four students, Arngeir proceeded to speak.

"Good morning, young ones. Today, we will see how you learn a completely new Shout."

He then looked to Renee.

"Young Renee, I could not help but hear that you have learned the first Words of Power for _Fire Breath_ and _Frost Breath._ Once we finish teaching you and your brothers the first Word of _Whirlwind Sprint_, __**'Wuld,' **_I would like your assistance in the immediate lesson."

Renee nodded as she joined her brothers in a semi-circle with one Greybeard facing them. Arngeir spoke to the man.

"Master Borri?"

Borri nodded and proceeded to project the word, _**Wuld**_, _onto the ground. As easy as can be, the four learned the first Word of _Whirlwind Sprint._ However, they had to wait until the Greybeards unlocked the Word for them before they were told to practice.

"Now we will see how quickly you can master a new Shout. Master Wulfgar will demonstrate _Whirlwind Sprint._ Then each of you can take a turn."

The quartet and the dragon followed three of the elders to an area with an iron gate and two small columns a few yards away. They halted at the columns while Borri walked to the side of the gate. The four students stood a couple of feet away from Arngeir and Wulfgar as the latter waited for some sort of signal.

A nod came from Arngeir, causing Borri to Shout at the iron gate.

__**"Bexâ€|""**_

Just then, Wulfgar Shouted _**Wuld**_, which to the amazement of the Dragonborn, sent the Greybeard to the other side of the gate at an incredible speed just before Borri finished his own Shout.

"_**Nahâ€|Kest!"**_

The last of the Shout closed the gate as Arngeir turned his attention to the trio.

"Stand in line next to me. Master Borri will open the gate. Use your _Whirlwind Sprint_ to pass through before it closes."

Each Dragonborn practiced the Shout at a time. Due to her "size," Renee was the first to use the _Whirlwind Sprint._ This was followed by Rahm-Ku and J'Kiir respectively. When it was Hiccup's turn, he performed well. But where his siblings were able to stop, Hiccup slid right into the Trio, causing them to fall onto their backs, or tails in certain cases.

"What was that?" J'Kiir asked as he started to stand up.

Hiccup looked down at his legs and found what the problem was. He groaned as he spoke.

"It's my metal leg. It's too smooth for me to stop. On the snow and ice."

Renee stood up and started to help her Viking brother up.

"Guess that's something we'll have to attend to when we get the chance."

After the four got up, they walked over to Arngeir, who seemed to be a bit astonished.

"Your quick mastery of the Thu'um isâ€|astonishing. I'd heard the stories of the abilities of Dragonborn, but to see it for myselfâ€|"

This stirred the curiosities of the siblings as J'Kiir spoke.

"At least as far as I am concerned, I don't know how we did it. It justâ€|happens."

Arngeir answered his Khajiit student.

"You were given these gifts by the gods for a reason. It is up to the four of you to figure out how to best use it."

Arngeir then motioned Renee over to his side, the latter obeying.

"Now, it would be best if I teach you how to teach each other the Words of Power you had discovered. Breathe the Word's power and will it to a hard surface when you Shout."

He then motioned Renee. Getting the hint, Renee focused on her _Fire Breath_ Shout and took in a breath. Her eyes on the stone beneath her feet, she uttered the word.

**"Yolâ€|"**

Much like with the Greybeards before, the foreign lettering appeared on the ground, glowing. And like before, the boys learned the new

word.

Remembering a discussion with Arngeir from the previous day, Hiccup used the soul of the Red Death he found he had in his body and used it to unlock the new power. Moving away from his siblings, teachers, and dragon, Hiccup practiced the Shout.

"**"Yolâ€|""**"

The moment he said the Word, fire came out of his mouth, not harming him at all.

He was now able to use the same terrible Shout the black dragon used to destroy Helgen.

Arngeir nodded in approval as he spoke again.

"You are all now ready for your last trial. Using the knowledge given to you, retrieve the Horn of Jurgen Windcaller, our founder, from his tomb in the ancient fane of Ustengrav, just north of Morthal. Remain true to the Way of the Voice, and you will return."

* * *

><p>Upon bidding the Greybeards farewell, the Dragonborn once more flew on Toothless and made their way down the mountain. Once again, Renee disliked the entire ride.<p>

Upon reaching the soft, warmer earth of Whiterun below, the quartet dismounted Toothless and Hiccup got the map out of the dragon's saddlebag. After unfurling the map, Renee pointed to a sigil that looked like a Celtic knot.

"There's Morthal, the capital of Hjaalmarch hold. Hjaalmarch holds the largest marsh in all of Skyrim. It is a preferable place to find Deathbell flowers as well as various lichen and all sorts of herbs and fungi."

J'Kiir took particular note of that. As Renee was about to point where Ustengrav may be, she hesitated. Seeing their sister freeze, Rahm-Ku spoke.

"Renee?"

Curious, J'Kiir took a look at the map and found what Renee was staring. At one point on the boarder of Whiterun and Hjaalmarch was a faded symbol of a town, its name barely legible.

Emeralda.

Seeing this, J'Kiir motioned his brothers to the spot. Hiccup could barely read it, but Rahm-Ku could. Once he saw it, his feathery crest drooped a bit. He then looked to Renee, who was staring at the spot with longing and sadness.

"Renee? How about we stop at Emeralda first? You said you needed to go there, anyway. So why not have it be our stop for the night?"

Renee looked to her brothers, who now got the gist. Even Toothless understood. She still had her inner demons to conquer. And it was in her hometown that she needed to do so.

"Are you sure? What about Ustengrav?"

Hiccup spoke up, catching his sister's attention.

"Renee, you are not only our best fighter, but our sister. Not only do we need you to be at the top of your game, but we also see that this is important to you. I won't mind making the stop."

Toothless gave a low rumble as he nuzzled Renee's side. Apparently he thought the same thing.

"Same here. From what I can see, I can always walk to Hjaalmarch if we need the plants there. So I won't mind the stop." J'Kiir spoke.

Renee raised an amused eyebrow.

"No looting. Got it?" Renee asked.

J'Kiir mockingly placed a hand over his heart.

"You wound me, sister. Really. You do."

Rahm-Ku placed a hand on Renee's back, knowing what to say due to experience.

"It's your call, Renee. I don't mind the stop either."

A single tear of gratitude fell from Renee's eye, falling onto the faded image on the map.

"Thank you€|my brothers. Thank you."

* * *

><p>Next Time: The first original chapter of this fic.

_The Dragonborn arrive in the derelict and empty village of Emeraldal, Renee's hometown. But the five traveler will discover that something sinister was responsible and Renee must conquer her fury and despair if they are to be saved. And what's worse: she will need the aid of the one Daedric Prince she despises the most: Namira. _

Please Review

14. Emeraldal

****Chapter 14****

****Emeraldal****

_Jeez Louise! I'm on a roll this week. Must be because it is finals.

_

_Please let me know how I did concerning the chapter below. I've

worked really hard on this chapter and I hope I strike everyone in the Feels._

I do not own HTTYD or Elder Scrolls.

* * *

><p>After completing their tests at High Hrothgar, the quintet of travelers were given the task to retrieve the Horn of Jorgen Windcaller from a tomb known as Ustengrav. However, there was to be a special stop along the way: Renee's home village of Emeraldal. After seeing that the village was on the border between Whiterun and Hjaalmarch, it was agreed that it was time for Renee to visit her birthplace.<p>

So here we are, in the skies of Skyrim. After charting a course and having gathered supplies from Whiterun, the four Dragonborn were flying on Toothless towards their destination. Surprisingly, Renee wasn't effected by her fear of flying this time, much to the relief of Rahm-Ku before her, but also to his and their brothers' worries.

As they followed the mountain range that bordered the holds of The Pale and Whiterun, it was Hiccup who decided to get his sister talking.

"So, what's it like in Emeraldal, Renee? I know you've told us that it was an emerald mining village."

Renee nodded, her senses spacing out to a wonderful time long past.

"Yes. The most common job in Emeraldal is mining emeralds. I cannot even begin to tell you of the beauty of the gems. I can still remember the days where my father would take me into the mine, probably thinking that one day I could become a miner myself. The miners were all quite friendly, even if there were some cantankerous at times.

"Outside the mine, the second most common livelihood also involved emeralds. I told you my mother was a gem cutter and a jeweler. I remember this one piece of jewelry she made. It was a pendent in the shape of a star, the emerald imbedded in the silver. It was a birthday present for one of the girls in the village. And I can't even remember how many emerald wedding bands I had seen."

"Sounds like your mother had quite the gift." Rahm-Ku spoke up.

Renee nodded, her saddened eyes returning but her smile lingered.

"I hope we can find some of her pieces once we get to Emeraldal."

The trio remained silent until they passed the last mountain. They could see the marshland to their right and the plains to their left. Renee pointed them in the right direction.

"Just follow the boarder until you reach where Whiterun, Hjaalmarch, and the Reach meet."

Hiccup and Toothless listened and with Rahm-Ku's help with the map, they followed the boarder until they saw the mountainous hold. Finally, after what may be hours of flying, Renee pointed downward.

"There! There it is!"

The boys and the dragon looked down to find a village nestled against a great mountain with plains and marsh surrounding the rest. Upon flying downward and landing, the quartet got off the dragon and approached a ruined wooden wall, a thick blanket of mist surrounding the area.

Renee took in a deep breath. She was home.

"Emeralda."

The four males followed the Nord into the empty village. Were it not that the plague that had struck the village a decade ago, it would have appeared that the village had not seen life for a century. All of the buildings were dilapidated and covered in mosses, fungi, and ivy. The grasses grew tall enough that it would hide their lower legs though there was still a dirt path that led to various parts of the village. The boys then decided to split up to check the place out.

J'Kiir was the first to split after noticing a strange scent in the air. It was old, yet it seemed familiar. And not a good familiar. J'Kiir followed his nose, careful not to inhale too much. Working with poisons and potions, the Thief was cautious with certain smells. And something about the air just didn't feel right.

Hiccup and Toothless were the second to depart from the group once the former caught sight of what may be the village blacksmith. Upon studying the forge, Hiccup called out to his siblings.

"Looks like the forge is still in good shape. Toothless and I will focus on relighting it. If not for our armor, then we'll at least we'll have something warm to go to. And it'll be a good beacon within this fog."

Rahm-Ku, hearing this, got an idea.

"How about we light all of the torches and lanterns in town? Give us more light?"

Hiccup nodded at his brother's remark and turned to Toothless.

"Come on, bud. Let's get some firewood."

Toothless silently agreed, not liking what he was sensing in this village.

As the Viking, dragon, and Argonian got to work in bringing light into the town, Renee continued walking without a word. Each step she took, a memory would flash before her eyes. Slowly, the decayed village transformed to Renee. She could see the village as it was when she was younger, filled with light and people of many races going about their daily lives.

Renee took a look to her left and found herself looking at what was once a trader's shop. The dilapidated building once more became new to the Nord's eyes. She could see people coming and going from the store. Inside, a Nord family of four worked to keep shop. Remembered a gruff, bushy bearded Nord manning the stall while his fair-haired wife worked the books. The children inside either playing or tending to the inventory.

The Nord Dragonborn then looked to the right and saw the local inn. Even after ten years, the sign still remained attached to the beam above. It was called the "Emerald Eagle Inn." She remembered the innkeeper telling the story of how the inn got its name. Apparently, the innkeeper's ancestor, one of Emeraldalda's founding members, saw an eagle sitting on top of a large deposit of emeralds sometime after the mine opened. It took off with a pair of emeralds in its talons. The first innkeeper took it as a sign and gave the inn its name.

As it came, the memory faded and Renee once more saw the decayed inn. How could such a lively village succumb and die from a disease? One name flashed in Renee's mind: Namira. Even though Peryite was the Daedric Prince of Pestilence, the symptoms that the plague carried made its victims more like living corpses, a favorite for the Prince of Decay and Revulsion.

After fleeing Emeraldalda and joining the Sabre Fangs, Renee kept an ear to the ground concerning the fate of Emeraldalda. One of the last reports and rumors she heard was that mages from the College of Winterhold found traces of Daedric influence in plague infested areas. Upon observing the corpses, it was determined that Namira was the one responsible for the plague. Since then, Renee loathed Namira. More than Mehrunes Dagon, more than Boethiah, even more than the dreaded Molag Bal.

Renee snapped out of her hatred once she saw her destination. Next to the main entrance of the mine was the remains of a two-story house. Even though there were holes in the thatched roof and parts of the walls, the house looked pretty stable. It was white with beams of brown crossing each other in a pattern.

It was her house.

"Home sweet home." Renee muttered as she approached the house.

Her heartbeat accelerated as she reached for the door handle. Her heart jumped as she touched the iron. Ten years since she touched the handle. The last time she did so, she was fleeing the village. Taking in a deep breath, she opened the door.

Inside, the house was barely touched by time, which was unusual. There were signs of time, like the moldy remains of what was once food and dust. But everything else was virtually unchanged. Renee entered her house, carefully absorbing the scene. She even opened the windows to let the dust out like it was a normal thing.

She passed the den and kitchen before looking to a door underneath the stairs. She opened it to find a room with a workbench and a window. Across from the work bench were velvet wooden busts of people as well as similar busts of hands.

This was her mother's workshop.

She remembered the times she would watch her mother work on the various gems and jewelry in this very room. The first time she was allowed to enter, she was six. As she grew older, she began to work with her mother. She placed a hand on the dusty workbench, leaving fingerprints as a memory flashed in her mind.

* * *

><p>Flashback: 11 years ago€|

_A 7-year old girl with crimson hair in a green dress worked with a smile at the workbench before her. She was almost finished with her newest creation. All she needed was to install a couple of smaller stones and she was done. As she was about to pick up the next gem, she heard the sound of someone knocking on the window. _

_She looked to find a man with long red hair tied dressed in miner's clothes back knocking on her window. She unlatched the window and opened it and spoke to the man. _

_"Daddy? What are you doing?" _

_The man gave a cheeky grin as he spoke to his daughter. _

_"Just checking on you, Renee. Your mother is coming back this evening, you know." _

_Young Renee puffed her cheeks in annoyance. _

_"I know, Daddy! I'm just about done with my gift." _

She then gave her own cheeky grin.

_ "But what about you, Daddy? What did you get for Mommy?" _

_The man reached up and rubbed the top of his daughter's head, messing her hair. _

_"That's a secret, Little Gem. Now if you'll excuse me, I have to get back to work. You know those milk drinkers in the mine can't get anything right without my help." _

_Renee laughed. _

_"Oh yeah? Who's helping who?" _

Renee's laugh was soon joined by a chorus of laughter behind her father. Apparently, some of the miners overheard their conversation and couldn't help but laugh.

_"_She's got you there, Roth." A Dunmer miner spoke up._

_ "Yeah. Of everyone in the mine, I for one had never seen someone who takes his sweet time digging up emeralds." An Altmer laughed._

_ Roth turned to them and spoke with a smirk._

_ "Come on, boys. You know that if I actually worked my quota, then you won't have anything to mine."_

_The miners laughed as they entered the mine. Roth then turned to his daughter and spoke. _

_"I suppose I better get back to the mine. I'll be home for lunch, Renee." _

Renee nodded.

_ "I'll be sure to have the food ready." _

That night, her mother, Greta, returned from the neighboring town that night. It was when she presented what she had worked on to her mother. It was a heart-shaped emerald set in a gold brooch. Smaller emeralds were imbedded in the gold in a dotted line. It was crude, but it was better than the best a child Renee's age could do.

It ended up as her mother's favorite birthday present.

* * *

><p>Present Dayâ€|

Renee sat in the room where she and her family would gather. It was the largest room in the house, the one place that saw a lot of people other than their family. She could hear the ghosts of their laughter echoed in her mind. She could see the smiling faces long past. She could even smell all of the food made in the nearby kitchen.

There were two more stops before she could meet up with her brothers. Solemnly, she walked up the steps and found herself facing a wall with two closed doors. She entered the door on her left, which was her room. Inside, she found her room as she left it: a bed set in a corner with a dresser at the other side as well a chest where she kept her toys.

She sat on the wood and straw bed, remembering nights where she vowed to pluck every goose feather in the village to make a comfortable bed instead of a prickly one. She gave a soft laugh as she looked at the wall that led to her parents' room. Her memories flashed forward to the night that she saw her parents one last time.

* * *

><p>10 years agoâ€|

8 year-old Renee walked up the steps tiredly, carrying a pot of soup and some bowls with her. The entire village had lost half its population to the plague and her parents were infected. She, however, remained healthy. At first, she thought she was lucky. But she then began to wonder otherwise. She worked around the clock trying to tend to every villager. Her parents were her last stop.

_Upon reaching the top of the stairs, she opened the door to her parents' room and found them on their bed. Their pale skin had changed to an ash-like black. Much of their bodies were wrapped in bandages to cover the open sores. Renee had to cover her mouth with a cloth so not only would she not get infected, but to spare her nose from her parents' corpse-scented breath. _

It was horrible to look at the outside, but nothing could compare to what her parents felt inside.

Renee began to pour the lukewarm soup into the bowls and started to feed her parents, starting with Roth.

_ "Here, Daddy. I've made the soup a little colder this time."
_

_Her father swallowed the first bite and cringed slightly. Seeing this made Renee cringed. _

_"Sorry, Daddy." _

Roth placed a hand on her arm.

_ "Iâ€|it's alright, Little Gem. As far as we're concerned, you've done great."_

_Renee placed a hand on her father's hand, tears starting to fall from her eyes. Greta turned her head to speak to her daughter.
_

_"Renee. It's time for you to leave Emeraldalda." _

_Renee's eyes widened in shock. Leave Emeraldalda? _

"Butâ€|why, Mommy? I promised to take care of everyone! I promised to make sure everyone gets better!"

_Greta shushed her child. _

"Shhâ€| Renee. I'm afraidâ€|this sicknessâ€|no one will get better. And Iâ€|I don't want you to harm yourself in preventing the inevitable. Which I why we want you to run from her. Run as far from the plague as your legs can carry."

_But Renee shook her head fiercely. _

"No! I won't leave you!"

_ Roth placed his hand to his daughter's cheek and, despite the pain, wiped away her tears. _

"But it won't be long before we have to leave you. Which is why we'd rather see you run while we are still alive than to stay and watch us perish."

_Greta slowly moved to place a hand on her daughter's other cheek.
_

"Now go. Go and become a strong, beautiful woman."

_ Then, her hand fell and she collapsed. Roth gently placed his wife back into her original position as he spoke to Renee once more.
_

"No matter what, Renee. Know that your mother and I will always love you and will always be proud of you."

Her emotions ragged, Renee consented to her parents' wishes and stood up. She spoke one last time to her loved ones.

_ "I love you too, Mommy and Daddy." _

_ She then turned around, ran down the stairs, and out the door. She ran from her house and out of the village that night. As she did, she screamed as tears fell from her face._

_ "I'M SORRY, EVERYONE! I DID MY BEST! I'M SO SORRY!" _

Renee cried and cried as she ran out of the gate and into the wilderness of Skyrim, leaving her life behind.

* * *

><p>Present day |

Renee pulled up her legs up to her face and began to sob. Even after ten years of training with the Fangs, the pain she felt never went away. The helplessness, the fear, the loneliness, the losses. Even living with the Fangs for years the pain never went away. It was at the behest of the Fangs' leader that she'd return to Emeraldalda to defeat her demons. To defeat her greatest enemy: her suffering.

With tears in her eyes, Renee stood up and left her old room. She then turned to face the door to her parents' room, knowing what was inside.

"No doubt Mother and Father are still inside."

She then reached for the door and opened it.

What she found caused her to gasp in shock.

* * *

><p>With the brothers |

Hiccup and Toothless had finished lighting the forge when Rahm-Ku lit the last torch and put it in its place. Despite the fog, the light exposed the town. As they performed their duties, they discovered the skeletons of the previous residents. The plan afterwards was to bury the dead with Renee being the one who could possibly give names.

But as they regrouped, J'Kiir came barreling towards the trio.

"Everyone! Everyone! I've found something you've got to see!"

"What in the world?" Rahm-Ku asked.

Hiccup was just as confused.

"J'Kiir's never loud or un-sneaky."

"That's not even a word."

But the argument went on hold as J'Kiir stopped in front of them, panting. He then held up a stick.

"Do you know what this is?"

Rahm-Ku gave his answer sarcastically.

"A stick?"

J'Kiir snarled.

"It's burnt Blood's Bane incense. I've found barrels of them all over the place. And what's worse is that these are absolutely deadly when burnt!"

This caught the trio's attention.

"What makes you say that?" Hiccup asked, wanting some answers.

J'Kiir informed them while Toothless took a light sniff of the stick and snarled at it.

"This incense is made up of ingredients not native to Mundus. In fact, the only place to even get the ingredients is in the realm of Oblivion."

Rahm-Ku then put in his two bits.

"So? A daedra was here? That was suspected before."

J'Kiir shook his head.

"That's what I thought at first. But I found nothing that could tell me that a daedra was here. Not even a single scale or bit of fur. I did, however, find evidence."

He then handed a tattered book to the Argonian.

"I've read this. And I believe that the accusations on who caused this were wrong. It was not daedra, but mortal hands that lit these incense."

The brothers then became shocked.

"Are you saying that...?" Hiccup cut off as J'Kiir nodded.

"Yes. Namira's Harvest wasn't a plague or a disease. It was a mortal-committed mass murder by poison."

* * *

><p>Back with Reneeâ€¦|

Renee froze, her emotions all wild at the sight. She found her father's skeleton in the bed, but found her mother's missing. Instead, a woman stood at the other end of the room.

She was wearing robes that looked somewhere between noble and beggar. Her dark hair draped over her shoulders with a braided crown on her head, carefully braided around a pair of small horns. Her jewelry resembled spiders, leeches, and even decayed body parts.

Renee would have mistaken her for a mortal woman were it not for the smell of decayed flesh emanating from her body and the fact that this wasn't the first time she had met this woman.

The woman gave a wicked smile as she spoke to the Warrior.

"Well, well, well. Welcome home, Renee Silverglass. I hope you don't mind that I popped in for a 'visit.' I do wish to speak with you concerning this."

She gestured to the corpse of Roth Silverglass as Renee began to snarl at the woman, growling her name.

"The Prince of Decay. The ruler of all things repulsive. Matron of Beggars. And the Queen of the Cannibals: ****Namira****."

* * *

><p>Next Time:

The Dragonborn Party discovers the truth behind the plague known as Namira's Harvest. And as they learn the truth from the Prince of Decay herself, the true murderer sets up his final plan.

Please review

15. Renee's Curse

****Chapter 15****

****Renee's Curse****

I'm back!

Ok. So there's gonna be several original chapters in between certain events. Just to spice things up.

I do not own Elder Scrolls or How to Train Your Dragon. Just the OC's.

* * *

><p>As Renee announced Namira's presence, Toothless sensed the Daedric Prince and, with ferocity in his eyes, charged toward Renee's home. Seeing this, the brothers gave chase.<p>

"What's with Toothless?" Rahm-Ku asked.

"I don't know. Something must be wrong." Hiccup replied.

The brothers halted as Toothless stopped, growling at the sight of a strange woman exiting the house with Renee, who was also snarling.

Hiccup, seeing the women, spoke to his sister.

"Uhâ€|Renee? D-do you know her?"

Renee answered, growling.

"Namira."

Rahm-Ku's scales became a pale green while the fur on J'Kiir's body bristled. The woman, noticing the Viking's confusion, took a couple of steps forward as she spoke.

"Most know of me as the Daedric Prince of Decay and Revulsion. And I must say it is quite a pleasure to meet dear Renee's brothers at last."

The title 'Daedric Prince' was enough for Hiccup to realize that he and J'Kiir were once again dealing with a daedra. Of course, this was a first for Rahm-Ku. Renee, on the other hand, looked like she knew the woman already. J'Kiir proceeded to speak.

"Charmed, I'm sure. If I may be so bold, why, or more likely how, did you come here?"

Namira slowly walked around the boys and the dragon as Renee kept an eye on her.

"There were several of my brethren, including myself, who had made plans in case Mehrunes Dagon failed in his attempt to conquer Mundus. But unlike back then, my power here is limited. The reason I came here was to clear my name."

"Clear your name? You mean for the plague that took everyone in this village and many others?" Renee snarled.

Namira rolled her eyes as she touched one of the decayed buildings, her gaze soon focusing on the brothers.

"I can assume you three discovered that this was not made by my hand?"

Remembering the incense, J'Kiir brought out the sticks he collected and presented them to Namira.

"I've found barrels of these all over town. Blood's Bane. But what do you know about this? Everyone's assumed that you were the one responsible for the Harvest."

Namira nodded at the Khajiit's report.

"I thank you for dropping my name from the plague's title, Khajiit. As for your question, my answer is this. Nearly 11 years ago, thousands of barrels containing my Blood's Bane were stolen. I was saving those incense for a different time when one of my loyal subjects came to me and told me that they were stolen."

"Do you have any idea by whom?" J'Kiir asked.

The other two brothers were just as curious as he was, but Renee was still fuming with anger. It was clear she wasn't convinced, but held her tongue as she struggled to keep her wolf's blood from going wild. Namira looked to the Nord with an amused look on her face before she spoke to the five.

"Indeed. The Blood's Bane was stolen by one of my _formerly_ loyal worshippers. A Dunmer named Dralsa Nethrend."

This caught Renee's ears. Raising eyebrow, she spoke.

"I remember. Before the plague struck, there was a Dark Elf wanderer that stayed at the inn. He said he was looking for twelve gems."

She then shuddered.

"He also gave me this creepy look. Like a lecher. Shortly after, when I hid from him, I could've sworn I've heard him say 'I have found the emerald.'"

She then looked to Namira.

"But what does he have to do with what happened?"

Namira's smile grew wider as she raised an eyebrow.

"Why, everything, of course. Although you have only heard only a sliver of his intentions."

The quintet gave Namira a confused. The Lady of Decay took a stick from J'Kiir's hand and eyed it.

"The man is indeed a lecher. But he is also insane. Perhaps more than Sheogorath, which is quite a feat."

Namira then took a seat at one of the nearby stone benches, the growing flora around her dying in seconds.

"The 'gems' he spoke about are in fact twelve girls of his choosing. Each one from a jewel-mining village."

This caused the Dragonborn's eyes to widen in shock. However, Renee's face contorted back to confusion and growing anger.

"What does that have to do with Emeraldalda?!"

The Prince raised an eyebrow in annoyance at Renee.

"If you will be so kind as to hold your tongue, child, I shall proceed to explain."

She then eased the eyebrow as she continued.

"Dralsa not only has a fancy for beautiful young women, but gems as well. Eleven years ago, he decided that he should go to the twelve best gem towns and collect two items from each village."

She then held up one finger.

"First, the finest of the town's signature gem."

She then held up a second finger.

"And second; a young bride from that same village."

This caught the Dragonborn's surprise again.

"Twelve brides? Why?" Hiccup asked.

But J'Kiir cringed at a thought and held up a hand.

"I don't think we need to know that."

"Well, then you won't like this." Namira spoke up, regaining the siblings' attention. "He would always get the jewel, but he is always refused when it came to a bride. In retaliation, he stole my incense by the barrel for a year before he went took his anger out on the first village: Garna."

The brothers looked to Renee for an explanation. She gave it willingly.

"Garna was a mining village similar to Emeraldal. Only the gems they mined were garnets. They were also the first to be struck by the plague."

They returned their attention to Namira, who continued calmly.

"Indeed. He first made sure his 'garnet' was immune to the incense. The concoction he used consisted of a combination of powerful healing herbs and strong Restoration magic. He would slip it into something only the girl would consume. Then, he lights the incense and waits until the village is dead. He then takes the girl and moves on to the next of the villages. What's more, there's a pattern."

"A pattern?" Rahm-Ku asked.

Once again, Namira nodded.

"Yes. Think about the jewels and the villages that had died."

The quartet of Dragonborn thought for a while before Renee got the idea.

"Each of those villages' jewels is a birthstone!"

The brothers and Toothless looked to the Nord as she explained.

"Garnet is the jewel of Morning Star, the first month of the year. And emeralds are the birthstones of Second Seed, the fifth month. Twelve months, twelve villages"

"Twelve brides." J'Kiir finished grimly.

For once, Renee looked to the Daedric Prince not with hatred or distrust, but with pleading inquiry. A look that Namira found _very_ amusing.

"Namira-

"_Lady_ Namira, child."

A scowl emerged on Renee's face, but complied.

"_Lady_ Namira. If I may ask, who was the 'emerald'? The emerald that Dralsa was looking for in Emeraldalda."

It was then the Prince of Decay gave a look. A look that said 'Oh, you know.' All four Dragonborn and one dragon figured it out as all of the males turned their attention slowly to Renee, the looks of shock donning their faces. It was Renee who spoke, her voice in horror.

"Me.** _I'm _**the Emerald of Emeraldalda."

Namira simply nodded, not saying a word.

J'Kiir turned his gaze to the Blood's Bane in disgust. Hiccup could barely stand and took a seat on the ground. Rahm-Ku's brotherly emotions took ahold of him and he embraced Renee tightly, who was still frozen from the shock. His crest first rose in surprise before flattening in anger.

"A creature like him doesn't deserve to see the light of day."

J'Kiir's ears flattened as he angrily clenched his fist, breaking the stick in it.

"I may be a thief, but that is seriously sick."

Hiccup turned to Namira as Toothless approached the two siblings and crooned as he placed his head on Renee's shoulder.

"Lady Namira, what exactly do you expect us to do?"

Namira, hearing this, narrowed her eyes as she answered the siblings.

"After eleven years, one of my creatures has finally located Dralsa. He is somewhere in the Reach. But finding and getting to him won't be easy."

J'Kiir spoke up as he and the others looked to Namira for answers.

"But you have a plan?"

Namira nodded before turning her attention to Hiccup.

"You are very familiar with your homeland's dragons, correct?"

Warily, Hiccup nodded.

"Yes?"

"And you have a talent for training wild dragons."

Once again, Hiccup nodded. Namira pointed to the southwest as she spoke once more. This time, she gave an answer.

"North of the hamlet of Rorikstead, there is a cave. Residing in that cave is a dragon of your caliber. I will have my creatures show you

the way. Train it, and you will find Dralsa. But this information does not come for free."

Everyone present stood back as Namira stood up. A look of irritation on her face, Namira approached Renee, Rahm-Ku and Toothless backing away, agitated.

"Don't think I have not noticed the little 'stunt' you've pulled at my shrine in Cyrodiil, girl. A stunt like that has warrant my anger. Therefore, you must pay the price."

She then grabbed Renee's arm and the Nord cried out in pain as she felt a burning sensation on her arm. Her cries cause the males to approach in order to help their sister, but something held them back. They only got a few steps before falling to the ground, numb but aware. Even Toothless was unable to move. Hiccup's first thought were Speed Stingers. But that changed when he noticed something small scuttle away from one of his sleeves.

A spider.

Hiccup looked up and managed to call out.

"What are you doing?! I thought you've said you needed us!"

Namira answered, not taking her eyes off Renee's arm.

"Oh, I do. My spiders' poison will only paralyze you for thirty minutes. Just enough time."

She then spoke to Renee, who was struggling to remove her arm from the Prince's grip.

"For what you had done to my shrine, I will place this curse upon you until you do two things."

"What?" Renee asked through her teeth.

Namira answered her, a slight smile emerging on her face.

"The first is one you will like. Only you will deliver the final blow. But as my champion. The second, however, is a moreâ€¦suitable punishment."

"And that is?" Renee asked, not liking where this was going.

Namira answered her as she removed her hand from Renee's arm, leaving behind a spider-shaped brand on the Nord's forearm, burning through the leather armguard.

"That mark is a sign of my influence. The only way to remove it is to do the second task."

She then gave a bigger, wicked grin.

"After killing him, you must ****devour his heart****."

The Dragonborn shifted their gazes to Namira in shock and repulsion. The Prince of Decay was making Renee commit an act of cannibalism. Namira then pointed to the mark on Renee's arm as she spoke.

"Each day you fail to eat Dralsa Nethrend's heart, the craving for human flesh will slowly take hold of you. If you fail by the end of a week, you will become a true cannibal. Permanently."

Suddenly, Namira's body began to disintegrate, each speck of her changing into a tiny spider. As the Prince of Decay disintegrated, her voice echoed into the fog.

"Remember. You have one week. Kill Dralsa and eat his heart. Otherwiseâ€¦"

She then gave a slight laugh.

"â€¦your brothers will look pretty tasty."

Then, just like that, Namira, the Prince of Decay and Revulsion, disappeared.

Renee hissed in pain as she stared at the burn on her arm. She had been cursed by a Daedric Prince. With her arm in pain, it took some time before she was able to place her brothers in comfortable positions surrounding the forge. As Renee propped Toothless' head on a small log she brought, the brothers began to speak.

"I can't believe Namira did that." Hiccup spoke.

Rahm-Ku gave a slight nod.

"I know. It's one thing to be attacked by an ordinary Daedra. But getting cursed by a Prince? That's an entirely new level."

J'Kiir shifted his eyes towards Renee, who joined them at the fire.

"What exactly did you do to make her mad, sister?"

A faint blush appeared on the Nord's cheeks as she looked away.

"Wellâ€¦I may or may not have vandalized her shrine in Cyrodiil. You know. Smashed a few statues, defacing her faceâ€¦"

The trio of brothers gawked at their sister, but it was Rahm-Ku and J'Kiir who released their outbursts.

***"ARE YOU INSANE?!" **

Hiccup and Toothless, despite their paralysis, cringed at the brothers' shout as J'Kiir, for the first time since they met, began to lecture.

"Rule #1 when it comes to Daedric Princes! Never, and I mean NEVER, vandalize their shrines! Especially if it's a Prince that is guaranteed to make your life absolutely miserable!"

"Hey! It wasn't my fault." The Nord protested.

This, however, earned a disbelieving look. Renee then groaned in frustration as she was forced to explain her actions.

"Alright! So it was! It was two years ago. On the anniversary I left Emeraldal. I have a tendency to get drunk on that day. You know, to kill the pain. Well, the Fangs were camping a mile away from Namira's shrine in Cyrodiil and, in my drunken state, staggered my way over, vandalizing her statue as a form of revenge for my village's demise."

The brothers gave her an incredulous look.

"Are you kidding me?! You defaced Namira's statue because you were drunk?!" Rahm-Ku shouted in anger.

If they could, the brothers would face-palm at that moment. It was then that Hiccup spoke up.

"Ok, ok! We can talk more of this another time. It's already past sunset, so I suggest we get some rest and let the poison leave our system. Then, in the morning, Toothless and I will teach Renee how to train a dragon."

"And us?" J'Kiir asked as he struggled with his paralysis.

Hiccup answered him.

"J'Kiir, you get to work on making more arrows. Rahm-Ku, read the rest of those books Farengar gave you. We may need those spells. Renee, you're in charge of meals for the next week."

It was then Renee's turn to give an incredulous look.

"Me? Why me?"

Hiccup answered her again.

"Because of three reasons. One: you're the best hunter we've got so far. We will need meat and fish. Two: With your wolf's blood and Namira's curse on you, it would be best if you will quell your hunting instincts. Just don't go hunt any people, alright?"

"And three?" Renee asked.

Hiccup narrowed his eyes at his sister, causing her to jump back a bit.

"_You're _the one who got us into this mess by wrecking Namira's shrine. I think the others can agree that it's a decent form of punishment from us?"

The Khajiit and Argonian nodded in agreement. This made Renee mad again as she gave a loud, frustrated growl.

"Argh! Now my brothers are punishing me too?! Isn't being cursed by Namira punishment enough!?"

She then stormed off.

"I gotta go find something to fight! I'll be back later!"

As Renee left in a huff, Hiccup returned his gaze to his

brothers.

"I have one more idea."

The brothers and Toothless turned their attention to the angry cursed Nord to the Viking, curious.

"And that is?" Rahm-Ku asked.

Hiccup answered him as shifted his gaze to the ruined town.

"We need a base of operations. An outpost. Breezehome is a good place to stay, but Whiterun doesn't have enough room for more than one dragon. And since Namira suggested we'd add another trainable dragon to the partyâ€|"

"â€|we need more space not only for the dragons, but for training for both dragons and riders as well. Brilliant." Rahm-Ku concluded in amazement.

But J'Kiir narrowed his eyes in suspicion.

"But _where _exactly are we going to find this 'outpost.'"

Sensing the paralysis wearing off, Hiccup was able to move his head. He used it to gesture the area.

"We're _paralyzed_ in it."

This made the brothers even more interested. Knowing that his brothers and dragon wanted more, Hiccup continued.

"Now that we know about the true cause of the plague, it's safe to say that Emeralds has been safe for settlement all along. Between tomorrow morning and at the end of Renee's week, we'll work in shifts rebuilding major parts of the town. The wall should be our first priority. If Renee's dragon is a Boulder-class, that will be very helpful. After that, we should build our own living spaces. I'm guessing the house Renee came out of with Namira was her house. So I'm sure she wants to stay there."

"Dibs on the inn!" J'Kiir called out.

The brothers gave J'Kiir another suspicious look before Rahm-Ku spoke.

"I don't know why you want the inn, but I don't care right now."

He then turned his head to Hiccup.

"My mother taught me all I need to become a merchant in case the mage thing doesn't work out. I will take over the general store and trading post."

"And Toothless and I can claim the blacksmith once we get it fixed up for a dragon to sleep in." Hiccup added in.

It was then that J'Kiir got another idea.

"I can set up shop as a potion maker and grow a large garden of

ingredients. Whatever we are facing in the future, you can never have too many potions."

"Now _that_ I completely agree with." Rahm-Ku replied.

The Khajiit gawked at Rahm-Ku's statement.

"You know. That's got to be the _first _time you've ever agreed with me wholeheartedly."

Hearing this, the brothers and dragon gave a laugh. But J'Kiir halted the laughter with another realization.

"We should talk to the jarl about this. Emeraldalda _is _in the Whiterun hold after all."

This brought the brothers' to attention as Rahm-Ku sighed.

"You're right again. We will need to present our case to Jarl Balgruuf, not adding the parts about the Daedric Princes or that Renee's been cursed. But I think we should talk to him about settling in Emeraldalda _after_ we remove Namira's curse from Renee."

The brothers nodded in agreement as they continued to make plans for most of the night.

* * *

><p>Please review.

16. Juggernaut

****Chapter 16****

****Juggernaut****

Whoot! I'm on a roll! Last week, I wrote one chapter for Dragonborn Four, wrote a chapter for Weapon Hostess yesterday, and now I have another Dragonborn Four chapter.

I do not own HTTYD or Elder Scrolls. Just the OC's.

* * *

><p>It was the next morning when Namira's paralysis poison wore off and, after being well-rested, the Dragonborn and Toothless got to work. Renee was still gone, no doubt hunting and venting her frustrations at the prospect of being cursed. As soon as they stood up, the brothers began to debate on where to start.<p>

"I know you said we should work on the wall, but we need a place to craft supplies like nails. Our best bet is to fix up the smithy first." Rahm-Ku reasoned.

"But we also need a defensive perimeter so we won't get attack by bandits and Divines-knows what." J'Kiir argued.

"But Rahm-Ku's right, J'Kiir. We need that wall, yes. But we need a place to gather and create supplies. Toothless and I can go back to

Whiterun and pick up what we need to get the smithy into shape and inform the jarl of our plans." Hiccup added.

While it was true he suggested the wall should be their first priority, Rahm-Ku had a point. He wasn't going to go back and forth between Emeraldalda and Whiterun for building supplies.

They needed the forge.

J'Kiir sighed, knowing he wasn't going to win this argument.

"Fine. But while Hiccup runs the errands in Whiterun, you and I should clean out the smithy."

He then looked to Hiccup.

"Anything specific you two need that we could get?"

Hiccup nodded as he stroked his dragon's head.

"See if you two can find some mining supplies like pickaxes. Back on Berk, I have this stone slab Toothless likes to sleep on. If you two can carve one out of the mountain near the mine entrance, we'd appreciate that."

The brothers nodded before Rahm-Ku got another idea.

"If you can, bring back the chest that has the Daedric artifacts we've collected thus far. It's best if those are safe from prying eyes."

With that, the Dragonborn gave their Viking brother all of their gold and he and the dragon took off. As the pair flew off, Rahm-Ku and J'Kiir got to work. Entering the smith's home, the brothers went to opening the windows, letting the faint sunlight in and the dust out. Much like with Breezehome, the blacksmith's house was caked with cobwebs and dust. Thankfully, there was a broom in perfect condition.

J'Kiir looked to the bed and cringed slightly.

"Uhâ€¦Rahm-Ku?"

"Hmm?" Rahm-Ku replied as he grasped the broom. "What is it?"

J'Kiir placed a hand on the mage's shoulder before answering him.

"I think the biggest thing we'll be working on is a cemetery. And _he's _our first burial."

Rahm-Ku turned around and realized what J'Kiir was talking about. On the bed was a skeleton, dressed in ruined clothing and cobwebs.

Emeraldalda's last blacksmith.

Looking to the door then back to the bed, Rahm-Ku spoke.

"We'll bring the bed out. When Renee gets back, we'll have her

identify him. And while we're carving out Toothless' stone, we'll make a tombstone."

J'Kiir agreed and got to the head of the bed. Rahm-Ku opened the door and propped it open with a stone before moving to the foot of the bed.

"On three. Oneâ€|twoâ€|three!"

At the Argonian's word, the brothers lifted the bed and carried it out the door. Once they reached the earthly ground, J'Kiir spoke, straining.

"Where do you want him?"

Rahm-Ku jerked his head to his right.

"Over there."

In agreement, the brothers placed the bed on the destined ground and sighed in relief.

"The guy better appreciate what we're doing." J'Kiir muttered as he arched his back, cracking it slightly.

The two then returned to the smithy and got back to work.

* * *

><p>That Afternoonâ€|

Hiccup sighed as he flew on Toothless back in the direction of Emeralda. As promised, Hiccup first stopped at Dragonsreach and spoke to Jarl Balgruuf in private. There, he explained to the jarl about what had transpired the past two days and told them the truth when they've rediscovered in Emeralda. He did tell the jarl about Namira providing the answers and handed him some sticks of Blood's Bane as evidence. He also kept Renee's curse out of the equation as well.

After convincing the jarl that Emeralda was safe from plague, Hiccup announced his proposal of granting Emeralda to the Dragonborn as an outpost and explained to him their plans. After hours of discussion, the jarl agreed to give Emeralda to the Dragonborn siblings and granted him wagons of building materials to be taken to the town. This gave Hiccup plenty of time to purchase supplies and collect the chest from Breezehome. He also explained to Lydia what was going on and named her Breezehome's primary caretaker, making it her home as well.

Now, it was nearing dusk and Hiccup was looking forward to what his siblings did. But just as he passed Rorikstead, according to the map, he noticed a familiar figure crouching in front of a cave.

"Renee?"

Motioning Toothless to land, the pair landed a few feet away from the Nord before Hiccup dismounted. The Viking and dragon quietly made their way to the Nord as Hiccup whispered to Renee.

"What's the matter, Renee?"

Despite being miffed at her brother about the night before, Renee motioned him and Toothless to crouch.

"I was on my way back with a fresh deer as well as some fish when I decided to stop for a spell. I went to get a drink in a nearby stream, not exactly thinking at the time. When I came back, the fish was gone! I followed the trail to here. That's when I saw it."

"What?" Hiccup dared to ask.

Renee pointed to something on one of the stone slabs that marked the entrance to the underground cavern.

"Look over there."

Hiccup followed his sister's finger to the spot where she was pointing. To his surprise, he saw movement on the rock. He then proceeded to pull a spyglass he made when Renee went to Orphan Rock and peered through. What he saw gave him the shivers and caused Toothless to growl.

It was a mass of spiders. No doubt Namira's.

"I see them. Think that's where Dralsa's hiding out?" Hiccup asked.

Renee shook her head.

"I thought it was at first. But remember what she said? Thatâ€¦thatâ€¦_flesh-monger's_ is somewhere in the Reach. And this cave's in Whiterun. And remember what she said about finding a dragon north of Rorikstead?"

Hiccup's eyes widened as he turned to his sister in surprise.

"Are you sayingâ€¦that a _dragon's_ in there. As in, the dragon Namira said would be beneficial to us?"

Renee nodded before they turned their attention to Toothless, who started to growl even more. Returning their attention to the mouth of the cave, the teenagers hid behind a nearby gathering of rocks with the Night Fury. The sound of light, yet thunderous footsteps alerted them that something was coming out. After a couple of breathless moments, they saw the dragon.

This was clearly a dragon that Hiccup had never seen before back in the archipelago. It was a quadrupedal beast that was about 15 to 18 feet from head to tail. It was lean like a cat, with tan-gold scales and pale underscales. It had a whip-like tail and a shorter, slender neck. Its head was similar in shape to that of a triceratops, but without the frill and the nose horn was slightly smaller.

The muzzle was beak-like, but sharp teeth were still present when the beast opened its maw to let out a yawn. It had piercing green eyes that looked like emeralds. It also had a set of horns that curved inward at first, but curved outward, as if it could shift from a

battering ram to a sharp weapon with just a tip of a head. It also had sharp spikes at the back of the bottom of each side of its bottom jaw with webbing connecting each spike.

Its wings were just as unique. Unlike a normal dragon's wings, which could fold out and in like a bat's, this dragon's wings folded backwards in an anti-clockwise fashion that its two clawed 'fingers' pointed to the ground. The three watched as the dragon unfurled its wings and stretched them out like a normal dragon's. They also took into account the muscular features of this dragon. No doubt it was powerful, but judging from the leg muscles, it looked like a skilled runner.

Needless to say, the pair of humans were amazed at the sight of this dragon.

"Ohâ€|myâ€|Thor." Hiccup whispered as he returned his spyglass' line of sight to the dragon.

Renee was equally breathless.

"Lean, yet powerful. Looks like it prefers to run. Menacing in appearance."

She then turned her gaze to Hiccup.

"Think this is the one?"

Hiccup kept the spyglass on the dragon, refusing to let it out of his sight.

"One thing for sure: Namira know how to pick a dragon."

He then gave a soft laugh.

"Oh, I'd love to see the look on Fishlegs' face when I tell him about this dragon."

Renee turned her head to Hiccup and gave him a look.

"'Fishlegs?' _That's_ your friend's name?"

Hiccup gave a slight smile to his sister, taking his eye off the spyglass.

"We have a tradition among Vikings. If you are given a scary name, evil spirits will flee from you."

"Aye, but come on. 'Fishlegs' and 'Hiccup?' Those aren't scary. In fact, it sounds like names used for children destined to be bait, target practice, or just really unlucky."

Hiccup narrowed his eyes at his sister.

"Oh? And what do you suggest I should've been called?"

Renee gave a smirk as she examined her brother, forgetting the new dragon.

"To be honest, you look more like a 'Rune' than a 'Hiccup' to

me."

Hiccup was about to retort, only to find himself speechless. His sister's suggestion of the name was definitely better than his own. Then again, he was the runt of the village.

Hiccup then returned his gaze to the spyglass, only to gawk.

"It's gone!"

Renee, hearing this, turned her head to find that the dragon was indeed gone.

"Damn! Think it went back inside?"

A low rumble came from above, causing the pair to slowly look up. Standing on the tallest boulder was the dragon, perched and looking angry.

"I think not." Hiccup replied as he slowly walked backwards.

The dragon snarled at them, Toothless doing the same back at it.

"Toothless. Hold." Hiccup told his Night Fury.

While he obeyed, Toothless continued to keep his gaze on the dragon. Keeping his eyes on the dragon, Hiccup slowly reached into one of the Night Fury's saddlebags.

"I think now's the time to begin the lesson."

"Lesson? What lesson?" Renee asked as she struggled to contain her fear.

She got her answer once Hiccup handed her a salmon.

"You're going to learn how to train your first dragon."

Renee tensed up, causing the strange dragon to arch slightly.

"Are you insane?! Do you really think now's a good time for that?"

"I say it's the perfect time." Hiccup countered, moving back slightly with Renee.

This allowed the dragon to jump down on the ground in front of them. Renee quietly gulped as she spoke to her brother.

"Ok, genius. Now what?"

"First, stand your ground. Then, offer him the salmon." Hiccup instructed.

Seeing no way out of this, Renee proceeded to follow through. She lifted the salmon in front of the dragon, allowing it to sniff it.

"Uhâ€|hey? Iâ€|uhâ€|got some fish. Want some?"

It was several gut-wrenching silent seconds before she got a response. The dragon was quick as he bit into the tail-end of the fish and pulled it from Renee's hand, gulping it down.

As it ate the fish, Renee whispered to Hiccup.

"Now what?"

"Now, let him know that you aren't a threat. Any weapons you have, toss them aside. Do not use any magic or Shouts. Let him know you are approachable." Hiccup told her.

Renee noticed something in Hiccup's words and spoke as she disarmed herself.

"I take it you've figured his gender already?"

Hiccup gave a slight shrug as he helped move Renee's weaponry away.

"We'll talk about that later. For now, focus on the dragon."

Once the last of Renee's weapons was away from her, the dragon began to circle around them, keeping his eye on Renee. Renee felt like she was a slab of meat from a butcher's shop, being examined for anything that proved undesirable. Hiccup, meanwhile, took mental notes about how the dragon was moving. He circled like a dog or a wolf, yet moved with the fluid grace of a cat. As the dragon made his way back to where he started, Hiccup whispered some more to Renee.

"Be on your toes. If he accepts you, he'll let you place your hand on his snout. Otherwise he'll test you in something else."

Renee nodded as she watched the dragon come to a halt. Suddenly, the dragon unfurled his wings again. This time, he started flapping. Or at least, he tried. As he started to flap, Renee noticed that the dragon flinched. Almost as if he was in pain. Renee's eyes darted around to find any sort of injury until she eyed the dragon's left wing. Behind the rock, she was only able to get a glance at his right side. Now that he was in front of her, she noticed something else.

His left wing was bloody.

Seeing this, concern overtook Renee as she reached for Hiccup, keeping her eyes on the dragon.

"Can you hand me another fish, Hiccup?"

Though unsure of what his sister was going to do, he complied and handed her another salmon. Once the fish was in her hand, Renee slowly made her way towards the dragon.

He noticed her approaching and growled, causing her to stop. But Renee stood her ground and spoke gently.

"Easy, easy. I'm not going to hurt you. I just want to see to your wing."

She then offered the fish.

"A peace offering, at least."

The dragon took this into consideration. He had dealt with her kind before. None of it good. But this one was different. While she was anxious around him, she was indeed concerned. He looked to the boy and the strange dragon, both not making any sudden movements. What were they waiting for? This was the perfect opportunity to take him down. So why are they just standing there?

He then returned his gaze to the female, his eyes catching the fish. His stomach knotted itself, telling him to feed. And this female was genuinely trying to help. Without further thought, he let down his guard and took the fish, laying down so that the female could look at his wing.

Seeing the dragon was going to comply, Renee carefully made her way to the injured wing. She tore off a piece of cloth from her tunic and poured some water from her canteen on it.

"Now, I'm going to clean this blood off. That way, I can get a better look. Alright?"

The dragon gave a soft snort and allowed Renee to work. Hiccup, meanwhile, marveled at how Renee was handling the situation. Although it did remind him of when he first met Toothless. The difference was that he was the one who caused the injury.

Toothless kept an eye on the dragon, making sure that the strange one didn't do anything to Renee. Over the past few days, Renee and the others had grown on him. Like Hiccup, Toothless had his own silent observations concerning the trio and knew Renee was strong, yet can be gentle when need be. Of course, she was still reckless at times. But not as reckless as J'Kiir.

The pair continued to watch as Renee cleaned the wing. It wasn't long before she was able to determine injury.

"I'm going to check the bone, alright?" She told the dragon.

She then carefully touched the wing bone, causing the dragon to flinch. She frowned as she determined the cause.

"This wing was crushed under something heavy. Meat around the bone is swollen, but the bones inside feel like shattered glass."

She then looked into the dragon's eyes, gaining his attention.

"I know you don't want to leave this cave, but there's someone nearby who can help you. _If_ you are willing to walk."

The dragon debated about what she had said. He didn't want to leave the cave he took from a group of trolls. But his wing did need repair. He looked to Renee and their eyes met. Renee kept her own emerald eyes focused on his own. Her fear was fading and he was beginning to see what she was through her eyes. Determined to the point of absolute stubbornness, strength mixed with compassion, and there was something else. Something that the dragon couldn't put a claw on. Something that told him that being with this female was

something that must be.

Trusting her, the dragon got back on his feet and nodded, letting her know that he was willing to go. Seeing this, Renee looked to Hiccup.

"Hiccup. Which way back to Emeralda?"

Amazed at the situation before him, Hiccup pointed to the northwest.

"About a few miles. Why?"

Renee answered him, still standing by the dragon.

"Go back there and tell the boys. Rahm-Ku might know the 'Healing Hands' spell."

"But what about you?" Hiccup asked with concern.

Renee answered him again.

"Chances are there's going to be some unwanted company drawn by his blood. I'll stay by him and walk with him back to-!"

But the dragon wasn't going to have it. He quickly picked Renee up by her tunic and, with a swift movement, tossed her onto his back whilst folding his wings. This caught the three travelers by surprise as Renee straightened herself out.

"What in-!"

But her words were cut off as the dragon began to run.

Hiccup, astonished, jumped onto Toothless and took off as well.

"Well, that's the first time that's ever happened."

The pair flew after the dragon and the Nord, Hiccup making more mental notes about the dragon. When it came to speed, this dragon was no pushover. Renee, however, was struggling to stay on the dragon as he ran.

"What in Oblivion?!"

She placed her arms around the dragon's neck until she noticed the wings. She took the chance and grabbed the good wing while holding on with the opposite hand.

It didn't take long, however, to find herself actually enjoying it. It was like riding a horse bareback, except that the 'horse' was scaly. Her anxiety once again ebbed away and instead of cursing, she found herself laughing.

"Hah! Well aren't you a fast one."

She then looked forward and grinned.

"What say we see how fast you can really go?"

The dragon let out a smirk at the female's suggestion. If there was one thing he loved to be, it was fast.

Seeing the dragon was going to comply, Renee placed her hands firmly on the dragon's neck and held on.

"Alright! Let's go!"

The dragon complied and ran faster, letting out a burst of energy as he did. While she did struggle, Renee found herself having the time of her life. She completely forgot her curses and her woes and instead found herself having fun.

Hiccup watched the scene from above and even he couldn't help but smile. His sister was a natural and was actually enjoying riding a dragon for once. And from what he could see, the dragon was enjoying it as well despite the injured wing. It seemed the swift dragon and the stubborn Nord were meant for each other.

"I wonder if it's because we're Dragonborn that Renee and I have been able to tame our dragons easily."

Realizing what he thought, Hiccup spoke to Toothless.

"I think we may have a new member of the team, bud. Let's just hope he agrees."

The pair flew until they were alongside the ground pair. There, Hiccup called to Renee.

"Hey, Renee? Wanna race back to Emeralda?"

Renee let out another huge grin as she called out to her brother.

"You're on!"

Hearing this, the dragons ran and flew faster.

* * *

><p>Emeraldaâ€|

It was nearing sunset and Rahm-Ku and J'Kiir had finished chiseling out a slab of stone for Toothless. They had finished with the majority of the forge's repairs and after a quick lunch got to work in making a fresh bed for Hiccup since the original was currently occupied. Once they got the new bed inside they got to work on the slab.

Once the slab fell to the ground, J'Kiir spoke.

"Alright. But now how do we get this inside the house?"

Rahm-Ku was about to answer when he noticed some pebbles moving on their own. And he wasn't the only one who noticed. J'Kiir saw this and climbed onto the smithy's roof. He looked out into the faint fog and saw two things coming towards the town.

"Hey! We've got company!"

Hearing this, Rahm-Ku climbed up after his brother and took a look himself. He squinted his eyes to identify the black flying object.

"I think that's Hiccup and Toothless. But who or what's that on the ground?"

The boys waited until the objects were in line of clarity before they saw the dragon running on the ground. Surprised, J'Kiir shouted.

"What in Oblivion is that?!"

He then noticed something on the dragon's back and looked harder. What he saw surprised him.

"Is thatâ€¦Renee?!"

This caught Rahm-Ku's ears as he looked at what J'Kiir was looking at. His jaw dropped as he saw that it was indeed his newest sister riding the back of a new dragon.

"Think we should open the gate?" J'Kiir joked as the four entered the town center.

The brothers got off the roof and slowly approached the four.

"What is all this?" Rahm-Ku asked.

Hiccup answered his brother with a smile.

"Guys. We've got a new dragon."

Renee then dismounted and spoke to the pair.

"But he's got an injured wing. Think you guys can help?"

The beastly brothers looked to each other for a moment before they approached they got to work.

"I'll concoct a healing salve with what I've got. I don't know how it will affect dragons, but it's worth a shot, right?" J'Kiir contributed.

"And I'll use my Healing Hands spell. It'll take some time, though. It's an Apprentice level spell, so it'll cost me more Magicka." Rahm-Ku replied as he examined the wing.

"As long as you can repair the majority of his bones, that'll be good." Renee replied as she stroked the dragon's snout.

As the brothers got to work, Renee and Hiccup got to work at making wooden splints from the ruins of the town. As they gathered the wood, Hiccup decided to speak to Renee.

"So? What are you going to name him?"

Renee had given the name some thought, having figured out a name

during the race.

"What do you think of 'Bane'?"

Hearing the name, the dragon grumbled happily as the two strangers cleaned his wing. Hearing him, Hiccup smiled.

"I think he likes it."

Renee smiled happily.

"'Bane' it is, then."

Hiccup then took the time to ask another question as he began to set up his part of the splint.

"Alright. And since you've discovered him, why don't you name his kind of dragon?"

Renee gawked at her brother.

"Seriously?"

"Seriously."

Renee took the time to think as she worked on Bane's wing. As she worked, she noticed how strong the dragon's wing muscles were. This brought her attention to the dragon's other muscles as well. On a rampage, this dragon would be a force of nature. It was then that a name popped up in her mind.

"How about 'Juggernaut?'"

Hiccup raised an eyebrow.

"Juggernaut?"

Renee then gestured to Bane's muscles.

"He's pretty strong. Most of it looks natural. Who knows what kind of power he has."

Hiccup thought about it for a while. It wasn't until Bane's wing was cleaned, slightly healed, and splinted that he voiced his opinion.

"Looks like 'Juggernaut's' the name. And he looks like the kind of dragon meant for the Tracker Class of dragons. I'll have to write all of this down and learn more later."

Hearing this, Renee held up a hand.

"Uh, how about we let him rest, first. In the meantime, we should get some fish."

Hearing this, Hiccup nodded and decided to let Renee off her punishment this time.

"I'll get the fish. You stay here with Bane."

Renee nodded as Hiccup removed everything he brought back from Whiterun with Toothless and left with some baskets. He came back an hour later just as dinnertime came.

Not once did Renee leave Bane's side. And the dragon greatly appreciated it.

* * *

><p>Bane's appearance is based off of Beau from the tv show "Dragon Booster."

_I played with Shakespeare when looking for an insult for Renee to call Dralsa. I settled with Flesh-monger. _

The 'Rune' conversation is a shout-out to Ember Neutron and her 'How to Become Dragonborn' story.

And for the wings, I got that from the first cinematic of Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver.

_Please Review _

17. Bonding

****Chapter 17****

****Bonding****

Hi. I'm back.

This is basically a more mellow chapter, but I hope it's sweet enough for you. I promise hilarity in the next chapter.

I do not own The Elder Scrolls or How To Train Your Dragon. I own the OCs.

* * *

><p>It was the following morning when Hiccup awoke in comfort for the first time in a while. He was in his new bed in his more permanent Skyrim home: the smithy of Emeralda. It must have been over a week, maybe two, since he last slept in a bed. In fact, the last bed he'd slept in was back in Berk, in his own hut with Toothless sleeping nearby on his stone slab and his father below.<p>

Turning his head to the right, he saw that it was only similar to home in little ways. Toothless was fast asleep on the stone slab Rahm-Ku and J'Kiir carved out for him, the sun shining on his ebony scales from the hole in the roof that would be used as the Night Fury's main entry. Unless rain came, then it would be closed and the Night Fury would have to use the front entrance.

Sitting up, Hiccup remembered more of the events of the previous day. More importantly, on how they found Renee's dragon, Bane. Looking to his bedside table, the Viking took notice of the notes he had made of the Juggernaut the previous night before he went to bed. By far, he made notes on Bane's body structure, which included sketches, and speed. While Bane looked like he'd belong to the Boulder or Mystery

Classes, Hiccup's gut was telling him that Bane belonged to the Tracker Class. He would have to learn more about Bane before he could confirm it.

His mind shifting, Hiccup found himself frowning at what day it was. It was the second day of Renee's curse by Namira, the Daedric Prince of Decay. That meant there were five days left before Renee would forever become a cannibal. Unless she were to eat the heart of her village's murder, Dralsa Nethrend.

No matter how he looked at it, Renee was in a lose-lose situation. He hoped that he and their brothers could help her get rid of the curse before the end of the seventh day.

His stomach growled, telling the Viking to stop thinking and get something to eat. Hiccup found it surprising that his stomach wanted nourishment while he had been thinking about his sister becoming a cannibal. He settled for getting up and opening a nearby barrel, where he had stashed some vegetables and began making himself stew. He also placed a basket of fresh fish Renee delivered outside his door that same morning and set it next to Toothless. The smell of the fish was enough for the Night Fury to wake and devour the fish feverishly.

After breakfast, both Viking and Night Fury exited the home and went about doing their own thing. Hiccup went to the forge and began making nails and other building supplies for his brothers while Toothless left to check on Bane, who was sleeping in the center of the town.

The Night Fury sniffed at the sleeping Juggernaut, catching a whiff of the medicine J'Kiir had applied the night before. It smelt terrible to the dragons, but the Khajiit informed them and the others that the concoction would clean the wound of any harmful substances that could make the Juggernaut sick. While it was appreciated, it still smelled terrible.

Toothless stood on his hind legs as he heard Rahm-Ku coming out of the general store. He was dressed in dark brown pants and leather boots but left without a shirt on. The Night Fury debated on two things regarding the Argonian's appearance: that he slept that way or he was going to work in that outfit. His ears perked again as he heard J'Kiir coming out of the inn, dressed in a similar manner.

Yawning, the pair spoke as they passed the dragons.

"Morning."

"Morning."

They then approached Hiccup, who was finishing up with some of the nails.

"What's today's agenda? Take it you are going to spend time with Renee and Bane?" J'Kiir asked.

Hiccup nodded as he got to work on another set of nails.

"When Renee gets back from hunting, we're gonna tend to Bane a little bit. Once he's fed and resting, then we'll help you two with the wall."

Hearing this, the brothers proceeded to wait until Renee returned. She came back with four baskets of fish and a deer over her shoulders.

Seeing her brothers, she spoke.

"Morning. Got today's meal."

Seeing the deer, J'Kiir groaned.

"Venison and fish again? I swear that's all you eat."

Renee narrowed her eyes at the Thief.

"Hey! There aren't exactly wild cows in Skyrim and I have yet to see any boars thus far! Eat what you can get and quit complaining, you milk-drinker!"

J'Kiir's fur bristled at his sister's attitude. Not in anger, but in surprise. And he wasn't the only one caught off guard by the Nord's sudden hostility. The Viking and the Argonian jumped as Toothless raised his ears.

Realizing what she had did, Renee rubbed her eyes and sighed.

"Sorry about that. I don't know what came over me."

"I have an idea. It's one of your curses. Question is 'which one?'" Hiccup explained as he got back to work.

It was then that Rahm-Ku stepped in. "Why don't you go feed Bane. He should be stirring soon, anyway."

Renee didn't say anymore, but obeyed as she set her catch down and walked over to Bane with one of the baskets of fish. Toothless "purred" as he smelt the fish and approached Renee. Seeing the Night Fury, Renee gave a grin.

"Sorry, Night Fury. These are for Bane. Didn't my brother feed you?"

Toothless gave off his usual "laugh" as Renee approached the awakening Juggernaut and began feeding him.

As he continued working in the forge, Hiccup kept an eye on Renee. And he wasn't the only one. His brothers approached him as they got to work on the deer.

"It's the second day and Renee's already agitated. It has to be the werewolf curse." Rahm-Ku whispered.

"Yes. But then again, she could be cranky because her palette is changing from animal to mortal." J'Kiir added his two bits.

Hiccup sighed as he set aside another bag of freshly-made nails.

"Or maybe it's because she is stressed because of the time limit. Add the punishment we're giving her for defacing Namira's shrine, possible lack of sleep, and the side effects of the curse and you've got a massive cauldron of emotion ready to explode."

The Mage and the Thief cringed at their brother's response. They hadn't considered the amount of stress their sister was going through. Upon hearing this, J'Kiir turned to the deer.

"How about I take over the hunting until this whole thing blows over? I'm just as much of a hunter as Renee is."

"But she needs to tend to her wolf's blood, too." Rahm-Ku argued as he handed Hiccup the deerskin.

"Yes, but with the training and such, we need to fill a larder if we're going to stay here. Besides, I need to get out of town for a bit." The Khajiit added as he stretched his muscles.

"And get out of work at the same time." Rahm-Ku added his suspicion.

Hiccup groaned as he intervened his brothers once again.

"Look. You both have good points. Renee needs to quench her blood thirst and we need to have a full larder. But what we have now for food will have to be enough until we have someplace to put it and a wall to protect the town."

As the brothers argued among themselves, Renee sighed as she feed Bane. Despite their attempts to be quiet, she could still hear her brother's whispers. Bane saw the Nord's saddened look and gave of a rumble from his throat, gaining the Nord's attention. Realizing that the dragon was calling, Renee shook herself from her stupor and brought out another fish for Bane.

"Oh. Sorry."

But Bane didn't take the fish. Instead, his gaze was focused on the Nord. A look that she was able to interpret it as _"what's wrong?"_ _and possessing legitimate concern. Renee sighed. There was no way she wasn't going to keep quiet with Bane. Especially if he was to help her with her vengeance and whatever else came in the future.

"Sorry. Things have been going to Oblivion for me lately."

Bane tilted his head in confusion, but motioned for Renee to continue. Seeing this, Renee sat down, her fear of the dragon mostly gone. For some reason, she felt like she needed to pour her heart out to this dragon.

"Well, when I was little, I lived in this very village with my family and many other villagers. What everyone, including me, thought was a plague came and killed everyone except me. Because of the symptoms, everyone pointed the finger at Namira: the Daedric Prince of Decay."

Bane let out a growl, alarming the Warrior for a moment, before she spoke again.

"I take it you know of the Princes?"

The Juggernaut gave a nod, for it was not uncommon knowledge, as he motioned Renee to speak more.

She did.

"For ten summers, I've blamed Namira for the death of this village. Then two years ago, I did something extremely foolish. I got drunk and vandalized her statue."

Bane gave a confused, yet surprised growl before turning into one similar to what her brothers gave her when she told them. Holding up her hands in defense, Renee continued.

"Hey, hey! I've already been lectured by my brothers! Besides, I'm already being punished for it."

Bane snorted, practically demanding Renee to explain. She continued.

"I didn't find out until two days ago that Namira wasn't the cause. She made the weapon that killed everyone, yes. But she wasn't the killer. It was a Dark Elf that had been passing by. He was a lecher who saw an 8 year-old girl as a bride. And he secretly made the girl immune to a poison he released shortly after. He did this so he could take the girl along with eleven others. Thankfully, he doesn't have her. You know why?"

A moment of silence came, causing Bane to become more and more curious. Renee sighed again.

"That girl was to be me."

Bane reared back his head in surprise. The story this female was telling him was not only morbid, but tragically honest. He wondered what other hell did she go through and motioned for her to continue.

"I ran at my parents' urging. I left the village before I was to be collected. I joined a traveling band of mercenaries and became a powerful force. I've joined a warrior's group called the Companions. Shortly after joining, I was tested to receive a 'gift.' A gift given to members of the upper hierarchy. To be 'blessed' as a werewolf."

Bane had encountered werewolves before, but never confronted them. They never bothered him, though he never wondered why. He remained silent to continue to hearing the story.

"Afterwards, after my brothers and I received 'special training.' We've discovered we were Dragonborn after a battle southeast of here and had to go up the Throat of the World to master our Thu'um."

Once again, Bane was caught by surprise. It was common among Tamriel-born hatchlings to hear stories of beings known as Dragonborn. Mostly it was to scare hatchlings into behaving. But there were few dragons that believed that the Dragonborn was not to be feared, but to be respected and that some dragons can sense when a

mortal was Dragonborn. Perhaps that was why he felt the need to go with the Nord female. Bane's thoughts became silent as Renee continued.

"As we began our final test, I asked that we'd stop here to confront my demons. I never knew until then that my village was murdered by a mortal, or that it was the latest in a string of murders involving certain mining villages. Namira approached us here, told us the story. Then, gave us an objective: to kill the mastermind of these crimes. But not before having her vengeance on me."

Renee then removed her new gauntlet, revealing the spider mark. It was as red as the night it had been branded into her skin. Bane sniffed the mark, only to cringe at the smell of decay emitting from it.

"This is my curse from Namira. I have a weekâ€¦well, five days now, to find the murderer, kill him, andâ€¦eat his heart. Otherwise, I'll be forced to become a cannibal and eat my own kind."

Now Bane couldn't help but feel pity for the Nord. She had endured hell and was still experiencing it. But that led another question to enter his mind. What of him? Seeing the question in the Juggernaut's eyes, Renee once again became honest.

"There's more. Namira said a dragon could help us find the madman responsible for this. Her spiders were at your cave. We suspect you may be that dragon. But we won't force you."

Once again, Bane was curious. What could he contribute to this? And what did she mean by "we won't force you"? It didn't take long for him to figure out the latter. The female was giving him a choice rather than forcing him to do her bidding. A part of him wanted nothing to do with the Princes. But he couldn't ignore the female's plight. Especially since she and her brothers were Dragonborn. Perhaps he would find out what he could contribute to this other than his strength.

Bane remained where he was as he placed his head on Renee's legs, like a dog would to his master. It took a minute for Renee to figure out what Bane's answer was. With a relived smile, Renee stroked the Juggernaut's snout, earning her a purr from him.

"Thank you, my friend."

Nearby, Hiccup watched with pride as he witnessed the situation. He gave Rahm-Ku and J'Kiir the materials needed to work on the wall a while ago when he saw Renee conversing with Bane. Setting the leather he was working on aside, Hiccup approached his sister and her dragon while Toothless left to check on the Mage and Thief. "You're doing great." Renee turned her attention to Hiccup as she spoke with confusion. "What are you talking about?" Hiccup answered her as he handed bandages and medicine to Renee.

"You and Bane will work together if the two of you have a bond. That way, you two will trust each other more."

"Like Shield Siblings?" The cursed Nord asked.

Hiccup nodded, having been explained about Shield Siblings

before.

"That's right. In time, you two may become a formidable team. Especially since you both have great strength."

Renee cracked a smile as she removed herself from under Bane's chin and got to work replacing the bandages.

"I guess you're right. You are the expert, after all."

As Renee changed the bandages, Hiccup took measurements of Bane's torso, causing the Nord to become curious.

"What are you doing?"

Hiccup answered as he took notes.

"The rest of the week, I'm going to train you how to ride a dragon. And before I can do that, I need to make Bane a saddle."

Renee didn't argue. Having ridden horses before, she knew the importance of a saddle.

"Mind if I help you when I'm done? I'm looking for a saddle that can handle a lot of weight, yet be light and comfortable for both Bane and myself."

With a nod, Hiccup resumed his notes as Renee aided the wounded dragon.

* * *

><p>Next Time...

****Chapter 18: Renee and Bane's Trial****

Renee and Bane's training begins, but it is proving to be a difficult task. As Hiccup and Toothless mentor the new rider and dragon, time is running out for Renee. On the Seventh Day, the Dragonborn Four seek out Dralsa. Can they find and kill Dralsa before time runs out for Renee?

* * *

><p>Please Review

18. Magic Lessons and Preparations

****Chapter 18****

****Magic Lessons and Preparations****

I have returned and with a new chapter. I've decided to skip a few days on Renee's Curse just so I can move the story along. I've also played with the Dragon Language Translator and I'll provide translations at the end of the chapter.

_I think the hardest part I had to work on for this chapter was explaining how magic would work. Thankfully, I have a reference book

that helped me a bit. If I am inaccurate in explaining how Magic in Elder Scrolls works, please let me know. I only have **Skyrim **and **Oblivion.***_

I do not own The Elder Scrolls or How to Train Your Dragon

* * *

><p>The next three days were filled with rigorous training for Renee and Bane, with Hiccup and Toothless as their teachers. It was a little easy for Renee to ride Bane on the ground as she had experience with horseback riding. However, when it came to flying, she was still nervous. Because of Bane's injured wing, Renee had to learn to fly on Toothless until Bane could recover.<p>

In the meantime, Rahm-Ku and J'Kiir worked on the town wall and, when she got the time, worked with Renee on the cemetery. After burying the blacksmith, Roth and Greta Silverglass were next. It seemed that Greta had fallen out of bed when she died, which was why Renee did not see her remains when she encountered Namira. Following the Silverglass burials were the remains of the trader's family and the tavern staff. This gave the Argonian and the Khajiit their own places without feeling disturbed at the sight of literal skeletons in their closets.

But as they days passed, Renee's curses were becoming unbearable. On the night of the Fifth Day, she started to eye her brothers with a hungry look. While hunting kept her wolf's blood in check, there was still the issue with Namira's curse. Thankfully, J'Kiir spotted some boars near Emeraldal and killed a few before Renee returned. He knew boar meat would subdue the wicked hunger from something his foster father taught him. Apparently, human flesh tasted like pork. Or was it beef? Whatever the flavor, it seemed to satisfy his sister.

On the dawn of the Sixth Day, Rahm-Ku decided to speak with Hiccup about an important matter. Seeing the Viking leave the smithy, the Mage hailed his brother.

"Hiccup. I need to talk to you."

Curious, Hiccup spoke.

"Well, alright. What's on your mind?"

Folding his arms, Rahm-Ku began to speak.

"You know what tomorrow is, right?"

Hiccup took a seat as he thought for a moment. It didn't take long for him to realize what Rahm-Ku meant.

"The Seventh Day of Namira's Curse on Renee."

The Mage nodded.

"You know what we have to do, right?"

Hiccup nodded.

"Of course. We've been planning for the past few days. It's what on

Renee's mind the most other than training with Bane and her hunger."

Rahm-Ku nodded again.

"We know Renee and J'Kiir will do fine and I have my magic. But what I am most concerned about is you."

Hiccup's eyes widened in confusion.

"Me? Why me?"

"Because outside of killing three dragons, you've only killed one mortal and that's this Orchendor elf. Not to mention you don't know magic or alchemy. Which is why I am here. I want you to spend today as my student and learn a spell or two just in case."

Hiccup's eyes widen with surprise.

"You're gonna teach me magic?"

Rahm-Ku nodded as he pulled out a Destruction spell book from his mage's robes and handed it to Hiccup.

"Remember that Healing spell book I gave you when we were making the trek to Bleak Falls Barrow?"

Hiccup nodded and returned to the inside of the smithy, coming out with the book.

"I've been working on my reading with this book."

Seeing this, Rahm-Ku continued.

"Well, since you can read our language better, I suggest you learn at least the Healing spell."

"But I don't know how to use magic like you and the others, Rahm-Ku." Hiccup protested.

Rahm-Ku then proceeded to hand the Destruction book to Hiccup as he stood up.

"That's why I'm going to help you. J'Kiir's hunting, the Companions called for Renee, and the dragons are still asleep. That should give us some time. And if we're lucky, I can teach you the Flames spell as well."

Before Hiccup could say anything, Rahm-Ku grabbed the Viking by the wrist and pulled him outside Emeralda's gates. Once they were a good distance from the wall, Rahm-Ku released his grip and turned to Hiccup.

"We'll work out here. That way, there's less worry about damaging the town."

Seeing that Rahm-Ku was intent on giving him magic lessons, Hiccup placed the books on a nearby rock as Rahm-Ku began the lesson.

"While not everyone has the ability to use magic as easily as I can, everyone _is _capable of casting magic. But before you can cast a spell, you must first get in touch with your Magicka."

"That's our magical energy, right?" Hiccup asked, earning a nod from Rahm-Ku.

"That's right. And it is about the hardest energy to tap into at first. You need to be able to sense the magicka before you can use it. That is the first lesson I'm going to teach you, today. Sensing and tapping into your magicka reserves."

Now Hiccup was curious.

"How do you do that?"

Rahm-Ku took a seat on a nearby rock and motioned Hiccup to do the same on the opposite rock. Once the Viking sat down, Rahm-Ku proceeded with the lesson.

"When you are able to touch your magicka reserve, then you won't need to do this exercise as much. First, close your eyes. And don't question why. I made that mistake when the Breton patriarch started to teach me."

Following Rahm-Ku's advice, Hiccup closed his eyes.

"Now, push every single thought out of your mind. Make your mind blank."

That proved to be a little difficult for the Viking. He was known for having a plethora of thoughts and ideas. So emptying his mind took a lot of effort. But once he did, he nodded his head, letting Rahm-Ku know he was ready for the next step.

"Now, allow yourself to sense the energies within you. Your Magicka will be the newer, unfamiliar sensation. Well, other than the Thu'um, that is. If I have to give Magicka a color, it would be blue."

As Rahm-Ku proceeded, Hiccup allowed himself to sense the energies within himself. There was nothing at first. But soon he saw streams of red and green. When he told Rahm-Ku this, the Argonian answered his mental question.

"The red is your heath. As long as it's long and red, you are healthy and fine. The green is your stamina. The green 'ribbons' will get short every time you use your stamina, but it will always restore itself with time. Unless you use stamina potions. The same goes for your heath and health potions. However, you cannot see how long your life reaches. Think of your red ribbon as a thick shield surrounding your Thread of Life. Now, try and locate your Magicka reserves."

Hiccup continued to focus, searching for a ribbon that stood out. He found one, but it was bright white.

"Must be my Thu'um." He thought as he continued to search.

He didn't have to search long as he found a shimmering blue ribbon amongst the colors.

"I see it." He told Rahm-Ku.

Hearing this, Rahm-Ku spoke.

"Nowâ€¦touch the ribbon."

While Hiccup's physical form held out his hand, his consciousness in the form of a tendril reached for the ribbon. Thenâ€¦he touched the ribbon. Rahm-Ku smiled as an Argonian could upon seeing a blue aura surround Hiccup.

"And there you have it. You've unlocked your Magicka."

Hiccup opened his eyes as he stared in awe at the blue light that coated his body. The feeling of magic wasâ€¦sensational. No words could describe the touch of his Magicka felt to him other than a cool breeze one would feel on a hot summer day. Looking to Rahm-Ku, Hiccup spoke.

"So this is what Magic feels like?"

The Mage shrugged his shoulders.

"Basic magic, yes. But when it comes to the different Schools of Magic, each feeling is different. For exampleâ€¦"

He then picked up the Restoration book and handed it to the Viking.

"â€¦The School of Restoration gives of a warm sensation. Like being embraced by a loved one, like a parent. This is, of course, the most accepted and one of the three more popular Schools of Magic."

"What are the other two?" Hiccup asked.

"Destruction and Conjuration." Rahm-Ku replied.

Hiccup blinked about the latter of the magic.

"I can guess why the Destruction School, but why Conjuration?"

Rahm-Ku proceeded to answer.

"Despite the reputation the School of Conjuration gets thanks to some Less-Desirables, Conjuration magic is very useful. Especially if you are in a bind. For example, say you and Toothless get separated and you need a distraction. By using Conjuration magic, you can summon a familiar or a Daedra from the realm of Oblivion and they can distract a foe. If you are fighting, you can conjure up weapons such as a sword, a battle axe, even a bow. Though for the latter, it would be best if you have a quiver of arrows with you. There is one spell that is either useful or wrong depending on your perspective."

"And what spell is that?" Hiccup asked.

Rahm-Ku pulled an item out of his pocket and tossed it to the Viking. When he looked at what he caught, he was surprised that it was a pair of small pink crystals, one duller than the other.

"What are these?"

"Soul Gems." Rahm-Ku replied.

Hiccup raised an eyebrow at the crystals as the lesson continued.

"Using a special spell called 'Soul Trap,' these gems can be filled with the soul of a defeated enemy, ranging from skeevers to mortal enemies."

Hearing this, Hiccup dropped the gems in shock.

"Souls?! These jewels have _souls _in them?!"

Rahm-Ku quickly held up his hands as he tried to calm the Viking down.

"Only the mages on the wrong path can place innocent souls into Soul Gems. I can use Soul Trap, but I would only capture the souls of those that would harm me and those around me. Like how we absorb the souls of the dragons of Skyrim. You could say we are also living Soul Gems, designed specifically for dragons."

Hiccup found this surprisingly true. Based on what Rahm-Ku said about Soul Gems and the Soul Trap spell, he and his siblings could be considered as living Soul Gems. So there wasn't exactly much to argue further. After all, he could tame and train dragons yet he was born with the ability to slay a dragon completely.

It was quite the paradox.

Rahm-Ku then proceeded to speak.

"We can learn more about Conjuratation magic another time. For now, let's begin with learning the Healing spell."

When Renee and J'Kiir returned to Emeralda hours later, they found their brothers outside the town while the dragons watched nearby. They also took notice at what Rahm-Ku was talking with Hiccup about.

"It seems that the lizard is teaching our northern brother magic. That's good. He needs to be better prepared for what may come."

Renee only nodded. She wasn't exactly feeling good at the moment. She hunted game as usual, but unbeknownst to her brothers, it wasn't enough. A couple days prior, she received a message via courier from Aela. She needed her help in taking down spots where the Silver Blood had set up shop. She had to inform Aela about her curse by Namira first, in case she became feral. The Huntress acknowledge it, but remained unafraid. Surprisingly, she found this beneficial. They would kill the Silver Hand and use their blood to satisfy Renee's savage hunger.

Renee barely complained. The second curse was becoming unbearable and she needed to tend to it. If she did not feed on human flesh, her mouth would feel so dry that no other drink could quench it. The

dryness was aided by a prickling sensation and intense cravings on human flesh. Over time, she would become delusional if she had not fed on humans. On the other hand, her guilt when she ate members of the Silver Hand would grow larger and larger despite the werewolf hunters killing Skjor during her post-werewolf initiation.

For Renee, the second curse was a living nightmare.

After placing hers and J'Kiir's game in the storage huts and leaving the Khajiit to begin skinning the meat, Renee returned to her house and deposited the spoils from the Silver Blood spots in a storage room within her house.

Jewels and jewelry went into a small bag to sell in Whiterun. Weapons she claimed, including a beautiful silver sword, were placed on weapon mounts and in one chest. She had given alchemical ingredients and food such as tomatoes and wheat to J'Kiir since he now owned the inn. Books she had collected were placed on a bookshelf, though she gave a couple to Hiccup by setting them on his bed. This included a book from an ancient ruin known as Silent Moons Camp that could teach the Viking how to make Lunar Weapons. Having killed the bandits there on a job and cleaning the place up, she figured her brother would be interested in creating these weapons.

Like her brothers, Renee knew what day it was. She began searching through the other chests and began to collect what she would need in the morning. She brought out a set of scale armor and fresh leather boots and armbands. She placed an empty satchel on the table in the main room of the house and began filling it with potions. J'Kiir said he would be the one to handle the poisons. She would pack food in the morning, but set some fruits and vegetables aside to plant in her freshly-tilled garden. She had informed her brothers a day ago to plant their own produce gardens, though J'Kiir was also planting an alchemic ingredients garden as well.

She then began to select which weapons to choose. She debated about a bow and a quiver of arrows, but decided on a steel greatsword. She wanted to deal as much damage to Dralsa Nethrend as she could. She wanted him to pay for all the suffering he caused both directly and indirectly. And it was just to her and her village. The eleven women's villages also needed to be avenged and who knew what had been happening to those girls over the years. If Dralsa was as bad as Namira and her own instincts claim, she needed to be prepared.

After she gathered what she needed and set them on the table, Renee set her weaponry aside and headed outside. She headed to the gate and made a left turn once she passed it, facing the two ally dragons. She approached Bane, who looked like he was bored out of his skull until he saw Renee. The Juggernaut happily approached his rider and allowed her to change his bandages. It was still going to be another week or two before he could fly again, but he knew he was being given the best of care the Dragonborn siblings could provide.

As Renee changed the bandages on the dragon's wing, she spoke.

"Hey. How about we go for a run after I patch you up?"

She did not need to say anymore. The dragon was eager for some action and he loved going for runs whenever he could. Taking his grin for a yes, Renee quickly tended to his wound and returned to her house to

fetch the saddle Hiccup had made for her. With great care, she placed the saddle on Bane's back and secured it so it wouldn't slip and slide. Once the saddle was on, Renee called out to J'Kiir, who was working on the torches on the recovering wall.

"Bane and I are going out for a ride. We'll be back in a while."

J'Kiir only nodded. He knew that his sister was becoming more stressed as her Judgement Day approached like a fired arrow. Going for a run on Bane seemed to be the best thing to lower her stress. Well—aside from smashing everything in her makeshift training yard or hammering away in the mine. Once they passed the gate, the Warrior pair galloped out and onto the plains of Whiterun hold.

Over the past five days, Renee had been under the tutelage of Hiccup and thanks to her experience in riding horses, riding Bane proved to be an easy and exhilarating feat. She still had to learn how to ride a dragon while flying and she was struggling to get over her fear of flying, but perhaps it would diminish over time. After all, like most children, she wondered what it would be like to fly.

That wonder vanished when Emeralda was taken from her.

For now, going for a "run" on Bane would satisfy them both. Not that either of them were complaining. As they ran, Renee noticed that the dragon's footsteps weren't thunderous as they should, given the dragon's weight. As they slowed down for a drink at a river that flowed along the Reach, Renee dismounted and began to drink with her dragon. She took further notice of Bane's feet and once she was finished, she turned to Bane and spoke.

"Mind if I take a look at one of your feet? I'm curious about something."

It was an odd request from his rider, but Bane allowed her to examine one of his back legs while he continued to drink. As she examined it, Renee noticed that the foot wasn't flat or thin like human feet or that of the other dragons. Instead, Bane's feet were padded with a dark yellow cushion of flesh, similar to that on a dog or cat. She touched the padding and much to her amazement, despite the running, the padding was still soft yet sturdy.

"These pads must muffle your steps. So you can sneak up on unsuspecting prey and protect your feet when running." She pondered.

This was definitely something she would have to tell Hiccup, knowing how excited the Viking would be. What other secrets did the dragon unknowingly held?

Suddenly, Bane jerked his head from the water and looked toward the horizon. Noticing the tension in the dragon's body, Renee released the foot and looked to where dragon was facing.

"What is it, Bane?" she whispered.

A snarl appearing on the Juggernaut's face was enough for Renee to take action. She withdrew the sword and shield she took with her that she had purchased from Whiterun and stood at the ready.

Flying over the mountain was a dragon.

Renee mentally cursed as she realized the dragon was making a bee-line for her and Bane. The Juggernaut was willing to fight as his tail flailed around and his teeth were exposed, demonstrating that he viewed this new dragon as a threat.

"Get ready, Bane." Renee spoke. "You're about to have your first taste of battling this kind of dragon."

As the dragon was just about on top of them, Renee and Bane moved opposite of each other as the enemy dragon released a breath of ice at where they stood. Seeing this, Renee groaned.

"Of course they can breathe Ice. We have the same power as them."

As the dragon turned around and went for a second strike, Renee retaliated with her own Voice.

"Fus Ro!"

The unfinished ****Unrelenting Force**** was enough to knock the dragon's head aside, missing Renee as he struggled to recover.

After another three swoops, Renee was becoming more and more frustrated.

"Ugh! The damned thing won't land and I didn't bring a bow and quiver or a Firebolt scroll."

She then turned around and found that Bane wasn't anywhere.

"Bane? Bane!?"

No response. Renee gawked as she dodged the enemy dragon once again.

"I can't believe it! He bailed on me!"

But a familiar roar made Renee think otherwise as she looked to the source. Bane was on a ridge that was at the enemy dragon's level. Renee was baffled.

"When did he get up there!?"

As the dragon was coming back for another round at Renee, Bane crouched down to the ground just like a cat and waited. When the dragon was at the desired position, Bane, much to Renee's surprise, pounced onto the dragon's back and began to cause a spectacle in the sky.

Renee watched in awe as Bane clawed at and bit at different parts of the dragon, causing it to roar and lash out in anger.

****"Hi krilon wah iidah zey, mey?! Hi fen biis fah daar, hi valdrekaan vax!" (1)****

As Renee struggled to get out of the way, she could've sworn she could hear Bane speak.

******_Zu'u krilon, hi kruziik tholaar! Zu'u fen ni vos hi aax dii
braan dovah fron! _**_**"(2)**_

Shaking her head after coming to the conclusion that it was just her imagination, Renee climbed onto a pile of boulders and called out to Bane.

"Bane! Tear at his wings! They'll ground him and I'll finish the rest!"

Bane heard Renee's call and tore into the enemy dragon's right wing with his claws. Not only did the dragon howled in pain, but they were losing altitude quickly. Seeing that they were going down, Bane jumped off the dragon and landed back on the ridge he jumped off of. Seeing that Bane was safe, Renee ran towards the fallen enemy dragon and lifted her sword. She was quick as the blade pierced the enemy dragon right in the brain. The dragon whipped his head around in an attempt to rid himself of the sword imbedded in his skull, it was all for naught. After a few minutes of thrashing, the dragon's head fell to the ground, dead.

As Bane approached Renee, he jumped as he saw the dead dragon disintegrate like burning paper and ethereal tendrils enveloping around the Nord girl. He would've jumped toward Renee had he not notice that Renee wasn't being harmed. As the threads began to fade, Bane remembered Renee's story about how she and her kin discovered they were the legendary Dovahkiin. Remembering that story was what helped Bane figure out what was going on.

Renee was absorbing the dragon's soul.

The Nord in question was expecting Bane's hesitation when it came to the "perks" of being a Dragonborn. While she was grateful that Toothless had accepted their "talents" as they were born with the power, Renee wondered about Bane. Which was why she told Bane about her and her brothers being Dragonborn days prior.

Once the soul had been absorbed and the enemy dragon had been reduced to nothing about bones, Renee looked to Bane, who gave an unsure look.

"I told you about this." She replied.

After minutes of silence, Bane approached her and lightly nuzzled Renee's side. The motion caused Renee to chuckle as she stroked the Juggernaut's muzzle.

"Guess it's alright with you, huh, Bane?"

The dragon "purred" as he received the attention from his rider. The Warrior smiled as she placed her forehead on the dragon's in an affectionate way. "Thank you, my friend." She then backed away to mount Bane as she spoke once more.

"Let's go back to Emeralda. I'm curious as to how Hiccup is doing with his magic lessons."

Bane snorted in agreement as he walked in the direction of Emeralda.

As they walked, a song was coming back into Renee's mind. She recognized it as the one song her mother would often sing to her for a lullaby. The words were sung in an elvish language long forgotten by all but a select few. Greta Silverglass being one of them. Normally, she would only listen to the song in her mind. But this day, for some reason, she couldn't hold it in anymore and began to sing.

(3)

_Hahren na melana _

sahlin

Emma ir abelas

Souver'inan isala hamin

Vhenan him dor'felas

In uthenera na revas

Renee vocalized the section between the first and second half of the song as her mother did. Bane didn't really mind the song. In fact, he found it rather soothing as Renee continued the song as they rode on home.

(: :)

Vir sulahn'nehn

Vir dirthera

Vir samahl la numin

Vir 'lath sa'vunin'

(Repeat /: :/)

* * *

><p>(1) ****_You dare to attack me, fool? ! You will pay for this, you wretched traitor! _**

_(2) _**_I dare, you ancient relic! I will not let you harm my fellow dragon kin! _**

_(3)__ This is Leliana's Song from "Dragon Age: Origins." For the English Lyrics, please visit the Wiki._

Next Up: The Hunt for Dralsa Nethrend has begun and time is running out for Renee. Can Renee kill the mad Dark Elf and eat his heart before she becomes a cannibal forever?

Please Review.

End
file.